

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

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A TALE OF TWO CITIES.

In Three Books.

BY CHARLES DICKENS.

BOOK THE SECOND. THE GOLDEN THREAD.

CHAPTER X. TWO PROMISES.

MORE months, to the number of twelve, had come and gone, and Mr. Charles Darnay was established in England as a higher teacher of the French language who was conversant with French literature. In this age, he would have been a Professor; in that age, he was a Tutor. He read with young men who could find any leisure and interest for the study of a living tongue spoken all over the world, and he cultivated a taste for its stores of knowledge and fancy. He could write of them, besides, in sound English, and render them into sound English. Such masters were not at that time easily found; Princes that had been, and Kings that were to be, were not yet of the Teacher class, and no ruined nobility had dropped out of Tellson's ledgers, to turn cooks and carpenters. As a tutor, whose attainments made the student's way unusually pleasant and profitable, and as an elegant translator who brought something to his work besides mere dictionary knowledge, young Mr. Darnay soon became known and encouraged. He was well acquainted, moreover, with the circumstances of his country, and those were of ever-growing interest. So, with great perseverance and untiring industry, he prospered.

In London, he had expected neither to walk on pavements of gold, nor to lie on beds of roses; if he had had any such exalted expectation, he would not have prospered. He had expected labour, and he found it, and did it, and made the best of it. In this, his prosperity consisted.

A certain portion of his time was passed at Cambridge, where he read with undergraduates as a sort of tolerated smuggler who drove a contraband trade in European languages, instead of conveying Greek and Latin through the Custom-house. The rest of his time he passed in London.

Now, from the days when it was always summer in Eden, to these days when it is mostly winter in fallen latitudes, the world of a man has invariably gone one way—Charles Darnay's way—the way of the love of a woman.

He had loved Lucie Manette from the hour of his danger. He had never heard a sound so sweet and dear as the sound of her compassionate voice; he had never seen a face so tenderly beautiful, as hers when it was confronted with his own on the edge of the grave that had been dug for him. But, he had not yet spoken to her on the subject; the assassination at the deserted chateau far away beyond the heaving water and the long, long, dusty roads—the solid stone chateau which had itself become the mere mist of a dream—had been done a year, and he had never yet, by so much as a single spoken word, disclosed to her the state of his heart.

That he had his reasons for this, he knew full well. It was again a summer day when, lately arrived in London from his college occupation, he turned into the quiet corner in Soho, bent on seeking an opportunity of opening his mind to Doctor Manette. It was the close of the summer day, and he knew Lucie to be out with Miss Pross.

He found the Doctor reading in his arm-chair at a window. The energy which had at once supported him under his old sufferings and aggravated their sharpness, had been gradually restored to him. He was now a very energetic man indeed, with great firmness of purpose, strength of resolution, and vigour of action. In his recovered energy he was sometimes a little fitful and sudden, as he had at first been in the exercise of his other recovered faculties; but, this had never been frequently observable, and had grown more and more rare.

He studied much, slept little, sustained a great deal of fatigue with ease, and was equally cheerful. To him, now entered Charles Darnay, at sight of whom he laid aside his book and held out his hand.

"Charles Darnay! I rejoice to see you. We have been counting on your return these three or four days past. Mr. Stryver and Sydney Carton were both here yesterday, and both made you out to be more than due."

"I am obliged to them for their interest in the matter," he answered, a little coldly as to them, though very warmly as to the Doctor. "Miss Manette—"

"Is well," said the Doctor, as he stopped short, "and your return will delight us all. She has gone out on some household matters, but will soon be home."

"Doctor Manette, I knew she was from

home. I took the opportunity of her being from home, to beg to speak to you."

There was a blank silence.

"Yes?" said the Doctor, with evident constraint. "Bring your chair here, and speak on."

He complied as to the chair, but appeared to find the speaking on less easy.

"I have had the happiness, Doctor Manette, of being so intimate here," so he at length began, "for some year and a half, that I hope the topic on which I am about to touch may not—"

He was stayed by the Doctor's putting out his hand to stop him. When he had kept it so a little while, he said, drawing it back!

"Is Lucie the topic?"

"She is."

"It is hard for me to speak of her, at any time. It is very hard for me to hear her spoken of in that tone of yours, Charles Darnay."

"It is a tone of fervent admiration, true homage and deep love, Doctor Manette!" he said, deferentially.

There was another blank silence before her father rejoined:

"I believe it. I do you justice; I believe it."

His constraint was so manifest, and it was so manifest, too, that it originated in an unwillingness to approach the subject, that Charles Darnay hesitated.

"Shall I go on, sir?"

Another blank.

"Yes, go on."

"You anticipate what I would say, though you cannot know how earnestly I say it, how earnestly I feel it, without knowing my secret heart, and the hopes and fears and anxieties with which it has long been laden. Dear Doctor Manette, I love your daughter fondly, dearly, disinterestedly, devotedly. If ever there were love in the world, I love her. You have loved yourself; let your old love speak for me!"

The Doctor sat with his face turned away, and his eyes bent on the ground. At the last words, he stretched out his hand again, hurriedly, and cried:

"Not that, sir! Let that be! I adjure you, do not recal that!"

His cry was so like a cry of actual pain, that it rang in Charles Darnay's ears long after he had ceased. He motioned with the hand he had extended, and it seemed to be an appeal to Darnay to pause. The latter so received it, and remained silent.

"I ask your pardon," said the Doctor, in a subdued tone, after some moments. "I do not doubt your loving Lucie; you may be satisfied of it."

He turned towards him in his chair, but did not look at him, or raise his eyes. His chin drooped upon his hand, and his white hair overshadowed his face:

"Have you spoken to Lucie?"

"No."

"Nor written?"

"Never."

"It would be ungenerous to affect not to

know that your self-denial is to be referred to your consideration for her father. Her father thanks you."

He offered his hand; but, his eyes did not go with it.

"I know," said Darnay, respectfully, "how can I fail to know, Doctor Manette, I who have seen you together from day to day, that between you and Miss Manette there is an affection so unusual, so touching, so belonging to the circumstances in which it has been nurtured, that it can have few parallels, even in the tenderness between a father and child. I know, Doctor Manette—how can I fail to know—that, mingled with the affection and duty of a daughter who has become a woman, there is, in her heart towards you, all the love and reliance of infancy itself. I know that, as in her childhood she had no parent, so she is now devoted to you with all the constancy and fervour of her present years and character, united to the trustfulness and attachment of the early days in which you were lost to her. I know perfectly well that if you had been restored to her from the world beyond this life, you could hardly be invested, in her sight, with a more sacred character than that in which you are always with her. I know that when she is clinging to you, the hands of baby, girl, and woman, all in one, are round your neck. I know that in loving you she sees and loves her mother at her own age, sees and loves you at my age, loves her mother broken-hearted, loves you through your dreadful trial and in your blessed restoration. I have known this, night and day, since I have known you in your home."

Her father sat silent, with his face bent down. His breathing was a little quickened; but he repressed all other signs of agitation.

"Dear Doctor Manette, always knowing this, always seeing her and you with this hallowed light about you, I have forborne, and forborne, as long as it was in the nature of man to do it. I have felt, and do even now feel, that to bring my love—even mine—between you, is to touch your history with something not quite so good as itself. But I love her. Heaven is my witness that I love her!"

"I believe it," answered her father, mournfully. "I have thought so, before now. I believe it."

"But, do not believe," said Darnay, upon whose ear the mournful voice struck with a reproachful sound, "that if my fortune were so cast as that, being one day so happy as to make her my wife, I must at any time put any separation between her and you, I could or would breathe a word of what I now say. Besides that I should know it to be hopeless, I should know it to be a baseness. If I had any such possibility, even at a remote distance of years, harboured in my thoughts and hidden in my heart—if it ever had been there—if it ever could be there—I could not now touch this honoured hand."

He laid his own upon it as he spoke.

"No, dear Doctor Manette. Like you, a

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voluntary exile from France; like you, driven from it by its distractions, oppressions, and miseries; like you, striving to live away from it by my own exertions, and trusting in a happier future; I look only to sharing your fortunes, sharing your life and home, and being faithful to you to the death. Not to divide with Lucie her privilege as your child, companion, and friend; but to come in aid of it, and bind her closer to you, if such a thing can be."

His touch still lingered on her father's hand. Answering the touch for a moment, but not coldly, her father rested his hands upon the arms of his chair, and looked up for the first time since the beginning of the conference. A struggle was evident in his face; a struggle with that occasional look which had a tendency in it to dark doubt and dread.

"You speak so feelingly and so manfully, Charles Darnay, that I thank you with all my heart, and will open all my heart—or nearly so. Have you any reason to believe that Lucie loves you?"

"None. As yet, none."

"Is it the immediate object of this confidence, that you may at once ascertain that, with my knowledge?"

"Not even so. I might not have the hopefulness to do it for weeks; I might (mistaken or not mistaken) have that hopefulness to-morrow."

"Do you seek any guidance from me?"

"I ask none, sir. But I have thought it possible that you might have it in your power, if you should deem it right, to give me some."

"Do you seek any promise from me?"

"I do seek that."

"What is it?"

"I well understand that, without you, I could have no hope. I well understand that, even if Miss Manette held me at this moment in her innocent heart—do not think I have the presumption to assume so much—I could retain no place in it against her love for her father."

"If that be so, do you see what, on the other hand, is involved in it?"

"I understand equally well, that a word from her father in any suitor's favour, would outweigh herself and all the world. For which reason, Doctor Manette," said Darnay, modestly but firmly, "I would not ask that word, to save my life."

"I am sure of it. Charles Darnay, mysteries arise out of close love, as well as out of wide division; in the former case, they are subtle and delicate, and difficult to penetrate. My daughter Lucie is, in this one respect, such a mystery to me; I can make no guess at the state of her heart."

"May I ask, sir, if you think she is——" As he hesitated, her father supplied the rest.

"Is sought by any other suitor?"

"It is what I meant to say."

Her father considered a little before he answered:

"You have seen Mr. Carton here, yourself."

Mr. Stryver is here too, occasionally. If it be at all, it can only be by one of these."

"Or both," said Darnay.

"I had not thought of both; I should not think either, likely. You want a promise from me. Tell me what it is."

"It is, that if Miss Manette should bring to you at any time, on her own part, such a confidence as I have ventured to lay before you, you will bear testimony to what I have said, and to your belief in it. I hope you may be able to think so well of me, as to urge no influence against me. I say nothing more of my stake in this; this is what I ask. The condition on which I ask it, and which you have an undoubted right to require, I will observe immediately."

"I give the promise," said the Doctor, "without any condition. I believe your object to be, purely and truthfully, as you have stated it. I believe your intention is to perpetuate, and not to weaken, the ties between me and my other and far dearer self. If she should ever tell me that you are essential to her perfect happiness, I will give her to you. If there were——Charles Darnay, if there were——"

The young man had taken his hand gratefully; their hands were joined as the Doctor spoke:

—"any fancies, any reasons, any apprehensions, anything whatsoever, new or old, against the man she really loved—the direct responsibility thereof not lying on his head—they should all be obliterated for her sake. She is everything to me; more to me than suffering, more to me than wrong, more to me——Well! This is idle talk."

So strange was the way in which he faded into silence, and so strange his fixed look when he had ceased to speak, that Darnay felt his own hand turn cold in the hand that slowly released and dropped it.

"You said something to me," said Doctor Manette, breaking into a smile. "What was it you said to me?"

He was at a loss how to answer, until he remembered having spoken of a condition. Relieved as his mind reverted to that, he answered:

"Your confidence in me ought to be returned with full confidence on my part. My present name, though but slightly changed from my mother's, is not, as you will remember, my own. I wish to tell you what that is, and why I am in England."

"Stop!" said the Doctor of Beauvais.

"I wish it, that I may the better deserve your confidence, and have no secret from you."

"Stop!"

For an instant, the Doctor even had his two hands at his ears; for another instant, even had his two hands laid on Darnay's lips.

"Tell me when I ask you, not now. If your suit should prosper, if Lucie should love you, you shall tell me on your marriage morning. Do you promise?"

"Willingly."

"Give me your hand. She will be home

directly, and it is better she should not see us together to-night. Go! God bless you!"

It was dark when Charles Darnay left him, and it was an hour later and darker when Lucie came home; she hurried into the room alone—for Miss Pross had gone straight up-stairs—and was surprised to find his reading chair empty.

"My father!" she called to him. "Father dear!"

Nothing was said in answer, but she heard a low hammering sound in his bedroom. Passing lightly across the intermediate room, she looked in at his door and came running back frightened, crying to herself, with her blood all chilled, "What shall I do! What shall I do!"

Her uncertainty lasted but a moment; she hurried back, and tapped at his door, and softly called to him. The noise ceased at the sound of her voice, and he presently came out to her, and they walked up and down together for a long time.

She came down from her bed, to look at him in his sleep that night. He slept heavily, and his tray of shoemaking tools, and his old unfinished work, were all as usual.

CHAPTER XI. A COMPANION PICTURE.

"SYDNEY," said Mr. Stryver, on that self-same night, or morning, to his jackal; "mix another bowl of punch; I have something to say to you."

Sydney had been working double tides that night, and the night before, and the night before that, and a good many nights in succession, making a grand clearance among Mr. Stryver's papers before the setting in of the long vacation. The clearance was effected at last; the Stryver arrears were handsomely fetched up; everything was got rid of, until November should come with its fogs atmospheric and fogs legal, and bring grist to the mill again.

Sydney was none the livelier and none the soberer for so much application. It had taken a deal of extra wet-towelling to pull him through the night; a correspondingly extra quantity of wine had preceded the towelling; and he was in a very damaged condition, as he now pulled his turban off and threw it into the basin in which he had steeped it at intervals for the last six hours.

"Are you mixing that other bowl of punch?" said Stryver the portly, with his hands in his waistband, glancing round from the sofa where he lay on his back.

"I am."

"Now, look here! I am going to tell you something that will rather surprise you, and that perhaps will make you think me not quite as shrewd as you usually do think me. I intend to marry."

"Do you?"

"Yes. And not for money. What do you say now?"

"I don't feel disposed to say much. Who is she?"

"Guess."

"Do I know her?"

"Guess."

"I am not going to guess, at five o'clock in the morning, with my brains frying and sputtering in my head. If you want me to guess, you must ask me to dinner."

"Well then, I'll tell you," said Stryver, coming slowly into a sitting posture. "Sydney, I rather despair of making myself intelligible to you, because you are such an insensible dog."

"And you," returned Sydney, busy concocting the punch, "are such a sensitive and poetical spirit."

"Come!" rejoined Stryver, laughing boastfully, "though I don't prefer any claim to being the soul of Romance (for I hope I know better), still, I am a tenderer sort of fellow than you."

"You are a luckier, if you mean that."

"I don't mean that. I mean, I am a man of more—more—"

"Say gallantry, while you are about it," suggested Carton.

"Well! I'll say gallantry. My meaning is that, I am a man," said Stryver, inflating himself at his friend as he made the punch, "who cares more to be agreeable, who takes more pains to be agreeable, who knows better how to be agreeable, in a woman's society, than you do."

"Go on," said Sydney Carton.

"No; but before I go on," said Stryver, shaking his head in his bullying way, "I'll have this out with you. You have been at Doctor Manette's house as much as I have, or more than I have. Why, I have been ashamed of your moroseness there! Your manners have been of that silent and sullen and hang-dog kind, that, upon my life and soul, I have been ashamed of you, Sydney!"

"It should be very beneficial to a man in your practice at the bar, to be ashamed of anything," returned Sydney; "you ought to be much obliged to me."

"You shall not get off in that way," rejoined Stryver, shouldering the rejoinder at him; "no, Sydney, it's my duty to tell you—and I tell you to your face to do you good—that you are a de-vilish ill-conditioned fellow in that sort of society. You are a disagreeable fellow."

Sydney drank a bumper of the punch he had made, and laughed.

"Look at me!" said Stryver, squaring himself; "I have less need to make myself agreeable than you have, being more independent in circumstances. Why do I do it?"

"I never saw you do it yet," muttered Carton.

"I do it because it's politic; I do it on principle. And look at me! I get on."

"You don't get on with your account of your matrimonial intentions," answered Carton, with a careless air, "I wish you would keep to that. As to me—will you never understand that I am incorrigible?"

He asked the question with some appearance of scorn.

"You have no business to be incorrigible,"

was his friend's answer, delivered in no very soothing tone.

"I have no business to be, at all, that I know of," said Sydney Carton. "Who is the lady?"

"Now, don't let my announcement of the name make you uncomfortable, Sydney," said Mr. Stryver, preparing him with ostentatious friendliness for the disclosure he was about to make, "because I know you don't mean half you say; and if you meant it all, it would be of no importance. I make this little preface, because you once mentioned the young lady to me in slighting terms."

"I did?"

"Certainly; and in these chambers."

Sydney Carton looked at his punch and looked at his complacent friend; drank his punch and looked at his complacent friend.

"You made mention of the young lady as a golden-haired doll. The young lady is Miss Manette. If you had been a fellow of any sensitiveness or delicacy of feeling in that kind of way, Sydney, I might have been a little resentful of your employing such a designation; but you are not. You want that sense altogether; therefore, I am no more annoyed when I think of the expression, than I should be annoyed by a man's opinion of a picture of mine, who had no eye for pictures; or of a piece of music of mine, who had no ear for music."

Sydney Carton drank the punch at a great rate; drank it by bumpers, looking at his friend.

"Now you know all about it, Syd," said Mr. Stryver. "I don't care about fortune: she is a charming creature, and I have made up my mind to please myself: on the whole, I think I can afford to please myself. She will have in me a man already pretty well off, and a rapidly rising man, and a man of some distinction: it is a piece of good fortune for her, but she is worthy of good fortune. Are you astonished?"

Carton, still drinking the punch, rejoined, "Why should I be astonished?"

"You approve?"

Carton, still drinking the punch, rejoined, "Why should I not approve?"

"Well!" said his friend Stryver, "you take to it more easily than I fancied you would, and are less mercenary on my behalf than I thought you would be; though, to be sure, you know well enough by this time that your ancient chum is a man of a pretty strong will. Yes, Sydney, I have had enough of this style of life, with no other as a change from it; I feel that it is a pleasant thing for a man to have a home when he feels inclined to go to it (when he doesn't, he can stay away), and I feel that Miss Manette will tell well in any station, and will always do me credit. So I have made up my mind. And now, Sydney, old boy, I want to say a word to you about your prospects. You are in a bad way, you know; you really are in a bad way. You don't know the value of money, you live hard, you'll knock up one of these days, and be ill and poor; you really ought to think about a nurse."

The prosperous patronage with which he said it, made him look twice as big as he was, and four times as offensive.

"Now, let me recommend you," pursued Stryver, "to look it in the face. I have looked it in the face, in my different way; look it in the face, you, in your different way. Marry. Provide somebody to take care of you. Never mind your having no enjoyment of women's society, nor understanding of it, nor tact for it. Find out somebody. Find out some respectable woman with a little property—somebody in the landlady way, or lodging-letting way—and marry her, against a rainy day. That's the kind of thing for you. Now, think of it, Sydney."

"I'll think of it," said Sydney.

DRIFT.

THE early Plea Rolls or Judgment Rolls of the Court of King's or Queen's Bench, preserved in the Public Record-office, contain not only the general proceedings in causes: that is to say in private suits of law: but indictments, informations, and such-like matters, wherein the offence concerned the King, or the Crown's authority in some direct or indirect fashion.

Part of the very curious Plea, which I am about to quote, I have taken from one of these King's Bench Plea Rolls in the time of King Richard the Second, of the year 1393; all the entries are written in Latin, and their title or heading runs thus:

"Pleas, before the Lord the King at York, of Easter term, in the sixteenth year of the reign of the King Richard the Second." The plea before us is from among the second numbers, membrane 37 (each roll contained so many skins or membranes of parchment sewed at the head, about two feet and a half long and ten inches wide, as the business of the term when digested and written down required):

"York.—John Tomesson, of North houses; Richard Jonesson, of the parish of Cotyngnam; John Berwold, of the same, senior; John Berwold, of the same, junior;" and others, some eighty or more in number, on the Tuesday after the feast of St. Peter in Cathedra (February 22), in the fifteenth year of King Richard the Second, were presented by the district Jury for Assault, &c., on the Close, or dwelling-place of Roger Whithose, &c. They are also charged with extortions, violent aggressions, and other offences, and with wearing a livery of one suit or character, and of illegally allying or confederating themselves for mischiefs innumerable. But the strangest degree of their misdemeanour lies in the following extract, which I have, as honestly as I can, set before the reader: "And they [the Jurors] say that the aforesaid John Berwald [*sic*], junior, of Cotyngnam, and others, made a certain rhyme in English, and caused the said rhyme to be publicly proclaimed at Beverley on the Sunday next before the feast of St. James the Apostle [July 25th], and at Hull on the Sunday next following, and at other divers

places within the county of York, on divers occasions, in the sixteenth year of King Richard the Second's reign, after the Conquest, which same rhyme follows in these words:

In the Contre herd was we	} wit al for to
Yat in our soken schrewes shuld be	} bake
Among this frers it is so	} Whether ye
And other ordres many mo	} slepe or wake
And yet wil ikkan hel up other	} Both in wrong
And meynteyn him als his brother	} and right
And also wil in stond and stoure	} With al our
Meynteyn our neghebour	} myght
Ilk man may come and goo	} I say you
Among us both to and fro	} sikyrlly
But hethyng wil we suffre non	} Wit what man
Neither of hobbe ne of Johan	} he be
For unkynde we war	} Any vylyans
Yf we suffred of lesse or mar	} hethyng
But it were quit double agayn	} to byde our
And acord and be ful fayn	} dressyng
And on yat purpos yet we stand	} In what place
Who so dose us any wrang	} it
Yet be myght als welo	} do again us
Als have I hap and hele	} all

Before the reader tries to dissect the corpus of this quaint old song and divine the cause of its creation, we must remark the poetical exuberance which insists that the two first lines shall rhyme together in the slip-slop fashion peculiar to bucolic sing-song, and that the third line shall entice an answer on its last syllable from that of the third line of the adjoining stanza.

It is also as well to remember that Beverley, one of the scenes of the outrage, enjoyed a reputation even at that early period for its rhymes and its music. One of the earliest charters to the town during the Heptarchy, ran in these expansively liberal terms:

As free make I thee
As heart can think, and eye can see.

And in the Church of St. Mary of Beverley there is a pillar which was furnished by the musicians of the neighbourhood, whose munificence was recorded by the inscription, "This pillar made the Minstrels;" and, if I mistake not, a plaster cast of "this pillar" is to be found at the Crystal Palace.

I cannot undertake to give the precise and exact meaning, word for word, of this purely rustic Marseillaise: it was a local riot-song, I take it, with allusions to matters exclusively belonging to the soken, district, or parish, where it was composed and sung; but the general interpretation is, as I fancy, this: Certain friars had been calumniating the poor people; "this frers, and other ordres"—i.e. these friars and other orders, each one holding up the other in wrong and right, so that in return the common folk vow that in peace or war *they* will maintain their neighbours. "Every one among us is free to come and go, I can assure you," but "neither Hobb nor John shall calumniate us. 'Twere

unkind to suffer calumny either from rich or poor, small or great." And in this resistance they are determined to stand, wherever they be, for what is done to one is done to all.

CASTLES IN THE SEA.

It is many years ago—perhaps more than I care to name—since I first saw that amphibious, dripping, flopping performance at the Polytechnic Institution, which was intended to enlighten the visitors upon the manners and customs of divers and mermaids. I had the honour of being introduced to the principal performer. I remember the show-diver as well as if it was only yesterday: a middle-aged, moody man, who presented the appearance of a sulky actor heartily tired of his monotonous work, or a worn-out, jaded pedestrian, who had got about half way through a thousand miles in a thousand successive hours. As he sat upon a short stool in a dark corner of the building, between the periods of his immersions, I felt that he was brooding over the uselessness of his life, and my young heart offered him its unsophisticated sympathy.

"How would you like to be pitted agen an electrical eel?" he asked.

"Not at all, sir," I answered.

"Very well, then," he returned, "that's what they're doing with me. They're advertising me agen that brute at the Adelaide Gallery."

"Indeed, sir," I said.

"I don't like it," he continued, "and I wish I could get out of it."

Many months after this, I visited the same place again; and yet I found him sitting on his stool, as if he had never moved from the moment I had left him. I came this time with a party of youths from the academy where I was being educated, headed by our master, who taught us science amongst the extras, and lectured us on certain days, in public places, like the Polytechnic, under some arrangement which he had made with the proprietors. I saw my friend the diver come forward in a curious, puffy dress, with his head done up in a goggle-eyed metal helmet, like a giant in the pantomime. When he rolled slowly and clumsily over the edge of the pond-basin into the water, like an unwieldy fish, there were many of the children who thought he was a bogie, and especially the boy who stood next to me, whom I tried to comfort by telling him that I knew the performer.

After the usual pennies had been thrown into the pond, and the diver had brought them up above the surface, and had tapped them on the top of his helmet, like an intelligent whale that had just learnt some juggling trick with coins, and was rather proud of it, our master took us aside, and began the lecture of the afternoon upon diving and diving bells.

He told us how Aristotle had mentioned divers' kettles, and Lord Bacon divers' bells, and how the first-known use was made of them by two Greeks at Toledo, in 1538, before the

court of Charles the Fifth, and ten thousand persons. He told us how the first idea was taken from a drinking-glass immersed in a basin, and how the diving-dress was no more wonderful than the diving-bell, being supplied, in the same manner, with air through a tube. He told us many other things of the same kind, which we took very little notice of, at the time, being more interested in the wet swimming of the live diver than in any dry histories of the invention. We forgot them all, long before the picture of the goggle-eyed, floating bogie in the pond had faded from our minds, and found them, when we grew older, in the Penny Cyclopædia.

I seized an opportunity, on this occasion, to slink away from my companions, behind the scenes (which, in this case, were garden-pumps and electrical machines), and have a few moments' conversation with my friend the diver.

"Here you are agen, young 'un," he said, as soon as he saw me; "does it rain outside, as usual?"

"No, sir," I answered, "it's quite a fine day."

"Oh, is it," he replied; "it's always wet with me, that's all I know."

"I dare say, sir," I answered.

"He's been pitchin' it into you pretty strong about me, ain't he?" asked the diver, alluding to my schoolmaster's lecture.

"Yes," I said, "he told us when you were invented."

"Look here," he returned, bending towards me in a confidential manner, "I don't mind telling you; that greasy pond ain't the sea, mind that."

"Indeed, sir," I said.

"No," he continued; "I don't say any more. This here ain't divin', and that 'ere ain't the sea."

I was summoned away, with the other boys, immediately after this mysterious communication, and I kept my secret. The desire to see a real diver strengthened with years, to give place, at last, to a desire to go down in a real diving-bell. The last words of the sham-diver were always in my ears; the form of the show diving-box was always in my eye; my reading seemed to carry me among pearl-fisheries, ship-raising, engineering operations, and places where divers and diving were always mentioned, until, upon growing out of the bondage of youth and academies into the freedom of manhood and the world, I lived for no other purpose than to descend in a sea diving-bell.

I have a theory, founded on experience, that what a man has steadily set his mind upon doing, he is sure to do. He may have to wait some years before the opportunity arrives, but if his mind remain fixed in the same direction, that opportunity will assuredly come.

The theatre of my diving-bell experiment grew upon me by degrees: it was the Admiralty pier works off Dover. It must have been ten or twelve years ago, when I saw the first signs of that work on the south coast, which has now re-

sulted in a projecting pier-arm of firm masonry stretching half a mile towards France into the stormy Channel sea, and which in twenty years more, perhaps, will be finished as a breakwater and a harbour of refuge. Sometimes the workmen leave their chains, their scaffoldings, and their blocks of stone, on a calm summer's evening, to come back and find that a storm in the night has swept away many costly months of hard, patient labour.

It was at the farthest end of this half-mile roadway into the Channel (thanks to the kind exertions of my friend Mr. Smiles of the South Eastern Railway, Mr. Wey the station-master at Dover, and Mr. Lee the contractor) that I was allowed to make my first acquaintance with the bottom of the sea.

I arrived at the works, on the sultry afternoon of the second of June, and was conducted, at once, down a wet muddy lane of iron tramway, between what appeared to be solid blocks of masonry, raised on each side, like the walls of some fortification. These were square granite boxes, made to a certain thickness of stone, and filled with a concrete mixture of sea-sand, pebbles, and lime. This composition, which takes several months to ripen or harden, is used from motives of economy, and when the boxes are fit for use, they are piled one upon another, and form the roadway into the sea. They are marked with a number, a date, and a price—the latter being three pounds sterling—which partly show the progress and cost of the work. Near the sea end of this lane, standing upon one side, under the heavy overhanging scaffolding, and between the concrete blocks, was a small wooden hut, not unlike a fisherman's hut in shape, but presenting the appearance of a rude early store in Australia for the sale of boots, coats, and Guernsey shirts. A large old cracked lantern was among the apparent stock in trade; but seven-league boots, such as are worn by men who go down the sewers, formed the staple. Most of these boots were hanging up against the wall of the hut, like specimens of some well-greased black and unknown beast; the great nails in the heavy sole, grinning like a hundred teeth. One pair were lying in a handy-legged posture on a heap of rubbish at the door of the hut, looking like the limbs of a fierce horse-soldier, whose body had been blown away in battle.

This was the haunt of the mermen-stone-masons, where the dry clothes of earth were exchanged for the soddened, pickled, salt-stiffened clothes of the sea; and here I, as an amateur merman, was disguised, so that I might have deceived my own mother as to my identity.

It appeared that I had undertaken to do something which, if not very desperate, was very rare. No "amateur," as I was called, had ever been down in a bell during the whole twelve years the works had been in progress. Princes of the blood, I was told, had exhibited a desire to see something of the lower mer-

man-life, and had been courteously but firmly refused. I thought that princes of as little blood as possible, were the best persons to descend in diving-bells, because of the determination of that vital fluid to the head. Any way, the hour's dip to the bottom of the sea that I had asked Mr. Lee, the contractor, to give orders for me to receive, was a luxury, apart from its rarity, that would add ten pounds to the cost of the pier.

I put on a blue Jersey fisherman's shirt, a pair of long, dark, rough, grey leg-bags—I cannot call them stockings—which made me look as if I were made up at that extreme to perform the part of a man-monkey; and after this I drew on a pair of loose brown frieze trousers. At this point I felt very apoplectic and puffy, and experienced a difficulty in stooping, which compelled me to call for assistance in getting into my waterproof seven-league boots. When this defensive toilet, this human fortification, was completed with a waterproof sou'-wester cap, I stood up a perfect merman, allowing for the dash of the amateur which I have before alluded to. My attempts at walking were heavy, dignified, and slow. There was no springiness, no dancing-master elasticity, about me. My frail, but once active body, was like a mummy encased in many solid folds; and at every step I took, I felt a resisting weight, as if I were walking through a thick bog.

A few paces out of the hut, and up the lane towards the sea, and I found myself among my fellow-mermen. Some were trudging towards the shore, having finished their day's work, while others were sitting on the sea-washed stone steps, which formed the termination of the pier-work, as far as it had reached, waiting for the rising of the bell which was to take them down below. They were all dressed very nearly in the same style as myself, except that my clothes had the proper amateur quality of being perfectly new.

Beyond this wet, slimy, iron-bound pyramid of steps, stretching some little distance further into the sea, was a heavy and solid scaffolding, reaching far above over our heads, and supported upon strong piles more than one half in the water, and with the other part out.

These piles, which cost about fifty pounds each, and which are often washed away in a storm, like straws, are strongly shod with iron. The part of them which appears immediately above the water is hung with rich brown seaweed, tipped with a deep border of green moss above. Standing upon some of the stone blocks which have already begun to peep above the surface of the water within this framework, were several of my fellow-mermen, who looked like Arctic voyagers among the ice.

At last my diving-bell (which was one of six on the works, four employed and two unemployed) pushed its slightly convex iron head above the waves, as it was drawn up by several firm chains, that were worked by windlass carriages on the scaffolding above. Slowly it rose, like a square rusty iron column, being dragged, like a tooth, out of the sea, until its lower edge broke

away from its suction of the water, and it looked nothing but a huge, dripping, weight. When it had reached some three feet above the surface, a boat rowed underneath it, and then a seven-league boot, followed by another seven-league boot, and again by two more seven-league boots, dropped slowly into the boat: looking, in connexion with the body of the diving-bell from which they came, like the legs of a tortoise, which that animal sometimes condescends to put out. The illusion was instantly destroyed by seeing the two mermen, who had been at work in the bell, following their legs, and dropping into the boat, to be rowed towards the wet and slimy pyramid of steps.

They had been down for the second five hours' period of their two daily dips (their day's work under water being about ten hours), and they looked muddy, wet, heavy, and tired, and flushed in the face with a reddish-olive brown. They go to work in couples at daybreak, and their wages are a little higher than they would get on land, being about one hundred pounds a year.

The diving-bells that are used at these works seem to be the ordinary engineering bells, or boxes, first employed by Mr. Sneath in repairing the foundations of Hexham-bridge in 1779, and afterwards in 1788, when he was engaged in constructing Ramsgate harbour. The air, in this instance, is pumped down a conger-eel-looking tube from the scaffolding above; another tube runs up to the same machine, containing an endless chain, by which anything can be drawn into the bell while it is under water; another tube is placed in the same position, through which the diver below, can signal to those above to shift the bell from place to place; finally, the whole structure is suspended by strong chains, fastened to nutted rings in the top of the bell. The tubes are elastic, and prevented from closing by a metal framework which runs up the inside.

I dropped clumsily down the pyramid of steps towards my boat, putting my heavy boots in the water that dashed over the stone, and my hands in slimy, blanched seaweed, that had clung to the masonry and looked like macaroni. In stormy weather, I was told the mermen are sometimes washed off these steps; but as I descended in what was considered fine weather, I was merely washed on them.

A few minutes, with a few bounding pulls of the mermen's special waterman, and I found myself under the dripping dome of my allotted diving-bell. Seizing a large iron ring which hung from the roof of the bell, I drew myself up into the chamber, placed my feet upon a muddy narrow board that went across from side to side and rested upon two small ledges, and seated myself upon another board, similarly supported, that went across one end of the bell, like a seat in a four-wheeled cab. My companion merman—a regular diver, who had directed my movements—followed me, and placed himself on the opposite side. The boat glided away, and we were left suspended over the water.

Our apartment had something of the bathing-

machine about it; something of the condemned cell in Newgate; something of the coal-mine; and something of Robinson Crusoe's hut. It was about four feet and a half high, four feet broad, and six feet long. Its walls were of cast-iron, about three inches thick, and its roof was slightly concave from the interior, containing six thick circular bull's-eye windows, about the size of tea-saucers, which, being covered outside with four crossed and recrossed bars of thin iron as a protection from falling stones, presented the appearance of open-worked tartlets. On one side of the bell were hanging a heavy pickaxe, a thick shovel, a crowbar, a hammer, a billhook—all of solid make—and a bundle of dirty tow that looked like a doll. On the other side-wall of the bell was a short length of iron sausage-work, reminding me very forcibly of Jack Sheppard in the strongest cell of Newgate, Baron Trenck in prison, or the lowest dungeon of the castle keep. This chain, for chain it was, was carried to be attached to a strong nutted ring in the roof of the bell, dropping into the water with a hook at its other end: which hook, when fastened to the ring at the top of every stone block that had been lowered by machinery to the bottom of the sea, would raise or move the stone by the simple raising or moving of the bell. This, in substance, was all the heavy work that was performed with the diving-bell machinery; the divers going down to attach and detach the chains—to place the blocks by directing the motions of the bell through signals given to the men above—and to dig out and level the foundations amongst the sea-anemones at the base.

We are let down, almost imperceptibly, by two men at the windlass machinery. As two fundamental principles in the management of diving-bells are, that they shall descend so that the four sides of their lower edge may touch the water on a level and simultaneously, and that the downward journey through the water shall be gradual and slow, any rapid paying out of the lowering chains would be instant death to those in the bell, by filling it with water. This accident is provided against by a checking "crab" of complicated structure, but of simple self-acting operation, which, the moment it is required, immediately comes into use.

By degrees, the square patch of thick milky fluid beneath our feet appears to rise towards us, and we are made aware of the bell having bitten the sea by a flopping, sucking noise, and the swelling up of the water to the narrow plank across the centre, near the bottom, on which we rest our seven-league boots. At this moment I become conscious of the measured beat of the watchful air-forcing pump, which sounds like the bumping of a heavy footstep in a moderate-sized house, two floors overhead; it is followed by a gentle snorting, like the respirations of a horse, the struggle of the air through the valve at the bottom of the conger-eel-looking tube. This valve is in the centre of the roof of the diving-bell, and cannot be interfered with by the men in the cell. If the bumping of the pump ceases, or the snorting is no longer heard,

it is the duty of the diver to pull the raising signal, as the supply of life is no longer coming in, and five or six minutes may exhaust the existing stock of air.

Our destination is sixty feet below the surface, or twice the depth of the street seen from the top of an ordinary house; and very slowly we proceed to reach it. The thick water below us is now stationary, and we have no guide by which to measure our progress except the different gradations of light. I am first made aware of the whole bell being under water by having my attention drawn, by my fellow-merman, who wears a cap, and looks like Robinson Crusoe, to a few pinches of sand that are washed about on the top of the bull's-eye windows. There is a calm silence, only broken by the flapping of a chain against the outside of the bell; the glittering sunlight, toned down as it has been by the thick glass, immediately changes to a bright green twilight; and the water casts off its milky thickness, and looks like green lamp-oil. This green colour was caused by the yellow sand still mixing with the blue water, as we were not far enough out from the land to get into the deep blue sea. At this moment I felt a sharp pain shooting through my head, which, scientifically speaking, was caused by the pressure of the condensed air in the bell, but which, popularly explained, to use the words of an old writer on the subject, was like having a couple of sharp quills thrust forcibly into each ear.

"Rinse 'em out with a little sea water," said Robinson Crusoe, who sat opposite to me, and whose face became more swarthy every foot we sank; "it did me good when I first went down, some two year ago."

I followed Robinson Crusoe's advice, paddled in the water between my legs, and poked my wet forefingers into my ears; but I cannot recommend the remedy as a perfect cure.

As we got a few feet lower (we sank about two feet a minute) the twilight deepened, and looking upward through the green bull's-eyes into the sea above us, it reminded me of watching a large space through a very small window that was covered with an impenetrable fog. Robinson Crusoe now began to provide for contingencies, by hauling in a candle with the endless chain. When it came at last through the water at the bottom of the bell—a messenger of light from above—it was a small composite dip, that did not seem much injured by its passage down the tube.

A few feet deeper, and the water became clearer—more like glass, and less like green lamp-oil—while the pain in my ears went off to a great extent, as Robinson had predicted it would. The twilight in the bell-chamber deepened, and the water beneath us became even more clear, until we at length sighted our promised land—the bottom of the sea. The water being calm, we had no occasion to light our candle (a light being a very common necessity), and we saw the lumps of chalk and flint lying side by side, like atoms that were magnified in a large microscope. The sea was

as clear as some spirit thrice refined, and it swayed to and fro over its stony bed, like a pond of liquid quicksilver.

Another foot lower, and we slipped off our muddy seats, to stand fairly at the bottom of the sea.

Here Robinson, very kindly, went through a variety of performances, with the view of enlightening me as to the manners and customs of mermen-stonemasons while at work in building under the sea. He took the loose plank upon which I had been sitting, and placed it against the other plank upon which he had been sitting, in an horizontal, but upright position; he then reached a couple of wedges from a small ledge at the side, with which he made this structure firm, until it was turned into a perfect trough. He then took the pickaxe, and dug out a few stones at the bottom of the sea, which he shovelled into this trough, and then we stood upon the lower centre plank, while he gave the sign to those above to move us.

"Now," he said, pulling the signal handle, which was like a syringe handle, a preconcerted number of times, "we'll go over the mud-box."

In a few seconds, with a slight roar as we left the bottom, we found ourselves rising slowly, like a very heavy balloon. The chalk and flint, after shaking about in the liquid glassy microscope for some little time, grew, by degrees, more misty, and, at last, disappeared.

"Now," said Robinson, giving another preconcerted number of pulls at the signal handle, "We'll hold hard:" and in a few seconds the bell was motionless.

"Now," said Robinson, acting as before, except with regard to the number of pulls, "we'll go to France;" and in a few seconds more, we were moving in a forward direction, away from the English coast. A few paces brought us to the spot where Crusoe knew the mud-box to be, and another series of pulls caused the bell to stop, and assume a downward direction. Casting my eyes in the water, I soon saw the dim outlines of an oblong shape, which gradually developed into a long open iron coffin, with heavy chains stretched tightly across its surface, and secured in the middle with a large iron ring. A few more seconds of descent, during which this chest of water seemed to rise slowly towards us, and I found that it was full of flint and chalk. The trough in our bell was soon knocked to pieces, by taking out the side wedges, and the rubbish which it contained was swept down into the mud-box beneath. This box, when full, is attached to chains communicating with the machinery above, and is hauled up to any position that the work may require. As a rule, it is drawn up full on the Ramsgate side of the pier, and emptied on the Folkestone side, as a protective embankment against the constant and partial washing of the sea.

These operations, with the block-raising and block-placing before alluded to, constitute the chief work of Robinson Crusoe and all his merman mates. Occasionally, to save time,

excursions are made with the protection of the diving helmet, under the edge of the bell, out into the deep sea. The air is then supplied to the labourer under water, from the chamber of the bell, by means of a tube; and he looks, as he walks upon the flinty uneven pathway, in heavily weighted clogs, to keep him steady and to keep him down, like some curious half-human monster employed in smoking a gigantic hookah, the bowl of which is the bell, and the pipe of which is the elastic communicating tube. "This here is divin'," as my old friend at the Polytechnic would have said, "and this is the sea."

Robinson, having put the bell through all the paces of which it is capable, lifting and dropping, backwards and forwards, and right and left, at last gives the signal—according to my desire—that we shall be raised once more to the upper world; and five men, as I am informed, now work the windlass which took two men to let us safely down.*

We rise, even more slowly and imperceptibly than we descended, because of the pressing weight of water above our heads; the light gradually changes from the black twilight of the bottom, through the green fog of the centre, up to the yellow sunlight higher still. The water over the bull's-eye windows becomes thinner and thinner, until it dashes backwards and forwards, like molten silver. The face of Robinson (who still sits opposite to me, the mud trough having been broken up and once more distributed as the two end seats) participates in all the changes of light, until it passes from a dark shadow to a bright, open, copper-tea-kettle countenance. A thin white mist, or steam, has floated between us all through the upward journey, which the learned tell us, somewhat obscurely, is generated by the water having overcome some portion of the air, in consequence of a slight tilting of the bell while we were at the bottom. No practical merman, or landman, can give any common-sense explanation of the mysterious vapour.

The water got thicker and thicker as we drew near the surface, until it assumed the appearance of a thin white paint; and all the way up, my ears were musical with a cracking, buzzing noise, as if a couple of bees had taken possession of my brain, and were striving to converse with each other across the passages.

At last I saw the silvery water fall off from the bull's-eyes, and in a few minutes our wet glistening iron chamber released its hold upon the sea. The fresh air rushed upward, tingling in my head, like a sniff of smelling salts; the boat came under us once more, containing another merman to take my place, provided with a tin bottle of tea (the chief refreshment the divers are allowed to carry down), and after wishing Robinson good day, I went on shore amongst a gang of mermen, who were still

* The writer has not only to thank these men, but the superintendents of the works, for their courtesy and attention on the occasion of his visit.

sitting patiently on the pyramid of dripping steps, awaiting the arrival of the slow and heavy carriages that were to take them to their building at the bottom of the Ocean.

SMALL SHOT.

TRAP ADVERTISING.

A CORRESPONDENT writes :

An amusing article in the first number of your periodical exposes certain traps which are set in the advertisement columns of the newspapers, and the folly of persons who are caught in them by their own credulity.

But there is a melancholy side of the subject. There is a class of persons victimised by these mock advertisements who, I think, deserve pity. I am one of that class.

I am the wife of an Assistant-Surgeon. My husband has the entire charge of a branch practice, with a salary of 80*l.* a year. His employer is anxious to extend this practice amongst the better class in the neighbourhood, and we are expected to keep up a genteel appearance. The clergyman and his wife, our rich neighbour and his wife, and a few of the gentry, call on us occasionally. We return their calls, with an eye to business, and we must be *comme il faut* on all occasions.

I must not do our household work, or carry my baby out, or I should lose caste. We must keep a servant, my husband's professional suit of black must be always in funeral order, his trousers must not wear out too soon with riding, or his boots with walking.

None but those who have tried, know how difficult it is with all this to keep out of debt : to say nothing of providing for a rainy day, which is simply impossible.

"How can we best reduce our household expenses?" "What is to be done with the next quarter's salary?" are questions often asked with anxious hearts, and seldom satisfactorily answered.

My husband works hard, night and day, for our support, and it grieves me to think that I can do nothing to help him. I am living a lady's idle life upon his hard-earned narrow means, and it often makes my heart ache to know that I am in one sense a useless burden upon him.

This is my constant trouble, and how to remedy it is my ever-present thought. In such a mood I take up a newspaper, and read several advertisements offering employment to females in any rank, in town or country. My reason tells me that these offers are a fraud and a deception, but I cannot help thinking how pleasant it would be to be able to earn a little to add to my husband's hardly-earned salary; how useful even a few shillings weekly would be. I ponder and hesitate: "It is but a few postage stamps; I will write and inquire particulars."

The letters are written, and, as soon as they are despatched, I begin really to hope for some useful result, and look eagerly for the answers by return of post. The answers arrive. The first contains a betting or racing paper; the

second is a great improvement upon betting, but hardly suitable for me; it is an invention for a new process of staining glass. The third answer is plausible but secret. The employment has nothing to do with photography, betting, papier maché, flower-making, &c. It is chiefly reading and writing, and is very lucrative. "It can be practised by any one in any station of life, at their own homes," &c. Eighteen stamps must be sent before particulars can be obtained.

"Reading and writing!" just what I should like. What can it be? If I could follow it profitably, what a relief it would be, and baby could have her new clothes. "I think I will send the stamps." The stamps are sent, and now I really hope and hope on until, before the answer comes, my hope has become faith. I am almost afraid to open the letter, and when I do open it, what a disappointment!

I am told to keep a registry-office for servants, and to have a black board outside the house, on which I am to copy advertisements from the local papers. The profit of this latter direction is unintelligible to me. And this is the return for my eighteen postage stamps; this is the downfall of all the castles in the air.

Many persons would say to me, you are rightly served, and deserve no pity. But I think we are all prone to believe what we much wish for, particularly in times of difficulty or distress.

DR. JOHNSON'S HOUSE IN BOLT-COURT.

The article entitled Dr. Johnson's Ghost, in our fourth number, has evoked an expostulation from Mr. Bensley, son of the worthy printer, the contemporary of Richardson, and who succeeded to the house after the great man's death. Mr. Bensley writes, with generous solicitude, to remove the slight spot of blame we cast on the "ruthless printer" who, several London guide-books incorrectly assert, pulled down the house that Johnson's residence had, in one sense, consecrated.

The corrections, sifted and summed up, come, we find, to this: Mr. Bensley, senior, never removed a brick of the venerated house. He guarded it with all the loving care that men keep the faded yellow letter and the folded curl of some dead love; but Time was as watchful for destruction as the good printer for preservation, and in 1817 he found it necessary to re-roof and generally "do up" the premises.

There was a fire on Mr. Bensley's premises in 1807, but it did not injure the Johnson rooms. In 1819, however, the imprisoned demon that is always planning our destruction broke out with victorious fury, and totally destroyed Johnson's house in Bolt-court—the room he worked in and the room he died in—leaving only its shadow, eternal for us all, in the pages of Boswell. No building (and let us strongly emphasise this for the sake of the compilers of future London hand-books), no building has since been erected on the exact site of Dr. Johnson's house. We conclude with Mr. Bensley's own words, which are touching in their simplicity, as well as from some of the facts they embody:

"I was born, a few years after Dr. Johnson's death, in a room only separated from that in which he died, by a party-wall; and three of my own sons were ushered into the world in the same room—for the premises have been the property, and mostly the residence, of my family from 1783 (when my father succeeded Allen the printer there) to 1858, when the freehold of what was in my childhood four houses and "a large garden," was sold by us to the Stationers' Company, who are about to erect a school there. I spent my childhood there, was engaged with my father in business, and succeeded him at Bolt-court in 1819, myself rebuilding the office, &c., as it now stands. Thus I have the best means of knowing all about it of anybody living—for father, mother, elder brothers and sisters, all old servants (but one), and a numerous circle of literary acquaintances and family friends who frequented our reading-room (once Doctor Johnson's back-parlour), are all, all gone! and I alone am left to tell the tale."

TOTTY'S CONSOLATIONS.

AN ART STORY.

OUR little Tots, just six years old,
Was living in an age of gold,
Till three o'clock to-day;

Her cousin Fan had been her guest
Since Tuesday last, and all was blest:
Ne'er was the dreadful truth confess'd,
That Fan must go away.

Some threat, but dimly understood,
And scarce believed, that they for good
Must part at three o'clock,
They cared for much as you and I
Prepare us for Eternity:
At half-past one, they hung to dry
Their newly made doll's frock,

And plann'd innumerable games,
When lo, the nursemaid Fate proclaims,
"Miss Fan, 'tis time to dress!"
"Twas as the roll of Tyburn's cart
On ears condemned: salt tear-drops start;
Each look'd the question, "Must we part?"
Child's Reason answer'd "Yes."

But bedtime's far till lamplight comes:
A cheery tune Miss Totty hums,
And runs to dress with Fan;
'Tis plann'd that she shall walk a mile,
Past many a hedge and brook and stile,
With me and Fan, to meet Mat Lisle,
Her uncle's farming man,

Who has to fetch Miss Fanny home;
But oh! the fields we have to roam,
The lambs and flowers to view,
Ere comes the separation's pang!
The darlings romped, and laughed, and sang.
(Poor rogues, an hour before they hang,
Will breakfast—stoutly, too!)

I led them through the meadows green,
These maidens, each to each a queen,
All life and prank and smile.
They noticed every flower in view,
Ran, loitered, kissed—ay! quarrelled too—
Until the cross-roads hove in view,
And there we saw Mat Lisle.

He sat within the old gig there,
Dozing behind the sleepy mare:

Miss Fan set up a shout,
Those well-known forms to see again—
That pink of drowsy serving-men,
That gig of twoscore years and ten,
That pony old and stout!

All thoughts, save those of home, adieu!
Impatient to my arms she flew,

Nor seemed an insect's weight,
As her I placed by Matthew's side:
A parting kiss, almost denied—
All things lost sight of but the ride
Home to her father's gate.

The gig drove off, its jangling sound
In Fan's unceasing chatter drowned.

Lord help us grown-up fools!
I had supposed the child would grieve
Her playmate and her sports to leave,
Nor recked the spells home-thoughts can weave
In palaces or schools;

And so pretended I was glad
To find she had not left us sad—
A sorry sophist Job!

Soon jealous pangs within me stirred,
That she was gone without a word
Of grief, when at my side I heard
A bitter, bitter sob.

'Twas Totty, with her large blue eyes
Distended to unusual size,
Left in the world alone!

The flowers dropp'd down she late had nursed,
Her twitching cheeks in tears immersed,
She sobbed, as if her heart would burst,
"My cousin Fanny's gone!"

I clutched her up within my arms,
And strove to hush her young alarms—
Her Fan she'd see again!
No! Hers the poet's fearful power
That grasps all woe within the hour,
Nor sees beyond: the tiny flower
Quivered and shut with pain!

I bore her home: she sobbed and cried,
A mother's looks her eyelids dried,
She kissed us all around:
"She would be good!" She kept her word,
The little staunch, courageous bird
Shed no more tears; but still was heard
That stifled, shuddering sound!

'Twas sacred grief we dared not blame.
(Alas! she can but feel the same
When Death her path shall cross.)
With sad respect we could but view
The brave young spirit bent in two,
Yet gulping tears and murmurs due
To a loved playmate's loss!

We dared not offer sweets or toys,
Insult her grief with vulgar joys;
In anxious care we lurked,
To watch the first glad symptom shown
That the poor heart had overflown.
No care had we; but soon her own
The little maiden worked!

A gentle tap—its sound I knew—
Came to my door, which open flew:
My little girl I saw.

Still shivering in her sorrow's brink,
She sobbed, "Papa—some pen and ink—
And—paper—if I had—I think—
That I should like—to draw!"

I seized the chance with ardour keen :
A sheet of cartridge, vast and clean,
Fit for a shipman's chart,
I spread before her on a board,
With pen and pencil amply stored,
Brushes and colours—in a word,
A stock in trade for Art.

The bait was tempting; down she sat
To draw her cousin Fan and Mat,
The pony and the gig.

The sorrows lulled beneath the charm
Of Art, the sheet became a swarm
Of living stock, for field and farm,
Duck, donkey, horse, and pig.

Her uncle's house (she'd never seen)
She pictured on its village green,
In wild perspective traced;
With every sketch her heart grew strong,
And bit by bit its load of wrong
Cast off, until a humming song
The bitter sobs replaced.

The pencil sped, the sighs were stilled,
The hieroglyphic sheet was filled

A-blaze with blue and red,
Orange and purple, green and lake,
Till, finding head and fingers ache,
She gently asked, "Please, may I take
My drawings up to bed?"

I've kissed her, smiling in her sleep :
Her jealous fingers firm hold keep
Still on the pictured scroll;
The little breast keeps heaving still,
The parted lips yet start and thrill;
But pleasant, soothing memories fill
The embryo artist's soul!

"O Goddess Art!" I cried, alone,
"Who hast such saving comfort shown
To this my little child,
Thy gifts, that I have thrown away,
On her bestow, nor let her stray
From thine, the path of Wisdom's ray,
The pure and undefiled!"

VIVA L'ITALIA!

Two years ago I (a City man, sir) set out alone from Balham Hill to spend my autumn in Italy.

I took the nearest way over the Simplon, after a short, cooling, icy glimpse of Switzerland, to Milan, the great capital of Lombardy, and whence our first bankers and pawnbrokers, as my excellent friend the editor of Notes and Queries assures me, first came. From the barren snows round the Simplon hospice we tore down the passes, our diligence horses crowned with chesnut boughs, to Duomo d'Ossola, where, when I saw brown, half-clothed men munching melons at street corners, I exclaimed with rapture, "I am in Italy!"

The next night, via Lago Maggiore, I got to Milan, through fat dark plains starry with fireflies, and through a night air hoarse with frogs. As the diligence swept into Milan through clouds of powdery white dust, I caught, on my way to the hotel, moonlight glimpses of the great white marble cathedral, with its pinnacles fine as so much goldsmith work, stretching up towards heaven.

And now, from the dark hush of the outer square, with its sky full of all violet depths of dimness, and spangled thick as the imperial robe of Charlemagne with jewel stars, I turned into the Caffè (always double f in Italian) del Duomo, in the great square of the cathedral. A moment ago I stood in the square looking up at the blue darkness above me, as a diver might view the sea above his head, the stars standing for such phosphorescent sparks as light the surf of the Mediterranean when it breaks in harmless flame along a midnight shore. I was communing with the spirits of the sky. Merely by passing through the open glass folding-doors of the caffè, my eyes were suddenly dazzled by a jangle of light, my ears by a Babel of voices. The waiters—Pierrots—were every one in their black evening dress, or in their tight-fitting black ballet dancing-trousers and their yellow jackets. The place was full of Austrian officers in their spotless white uniforms, faced and turned down with mazarin blue and cherry colour, their heavy steel-sheathed cavalry swords, tasseled and knotted with white pipe-clayed leather, rested on chairs, hung near them on the wall beside their cocked-hats, or clashed as they moved insolently along the white-and-black tiled floor of the caffè. It was a wonderful change from the darkness and almost mournful hush of the outer square, roofed by the black blue sky, where the white marble Duomo showed only by ghastly glimmers through the darkness.

I threw myself on a long settee that lined the wall, within convenient reach of the little immovable round marble table on which some empty coffee-cups stood, and fell to study the Milanese. I soon forgot the outer darkness, where the great white shrine of marble, pale and wan, heaped up its little clear-cut casket pinnacles, fine-leaved and sharp, unto the lingering stars, that seemed to burn like angels' watch-fires on their highest cresting peaks, and plunged myself, with the relish and abandonment of a traveller courting forgetfulness and pleasure, in the maze of crystal lights that the great mirrors on the walls echoed and repeated till they seemed to lengthen into avenues and corridors of yellow lamps, repeating, too, the white uniforms, and the plumed hats, and the fair flaxen moustaches, and the swords and the mazarins and cherry colours, till the place seemed the banquet-hall of the whole white-coated Austrian army: the waiters who moved about among the crowd standing for orderlies or aide-de-camps. Glimpses of side rooms showed groups of patient subalterns with small ground-plans of black-and-white dominoes before them, and each with his small redoubt of conquered pieces thrown up behind his line of battle; and from other doorways leading into inner rooms I heard the roll and clashing dry rattle of the red and white balls on the green cloth, luminous in the orbing lamplight.

It was some time before my pleased eye could take in the various elements of this animated scene; but, as my eye grew calmer, I found that the occupants of this caffè—like all the Milanese

caffes I had seen—could easily be divided into three sections: Austrian officers, Milanese citizens, and the landlord (the padrone) and his busy staff of waiters.

There—at a sort of idealised bar built up with ice tins, massy coffee-cups, trays for change, lemonade bottles, little receptacles for the sugar, and silvery clear tumblers of water, which the Italians drink to correct the biliousness and heat of coffee—sat the landlord, playing legerdemain tricks with silver coins, hauling in and dealing out copper change; and there were the waiters in perpetual ebb and flow, bringing in empty cups, or loading trays with smoking cupfuls for some expectant sour-faced Austrian captain. The padrone looked like a male Fortune, distributing gifts and favours, as he tore asunder roils, or filled up small decanters of clarety Chiavenna wine. The Milanese citizens there was no mistaking, with their gay, flippant, uneasy manner, and dark pale faces, rather effeminate in character. Each had his little paper flag or newspaper fastened to a strop handle; each his smoking fragrant coffee-cup, tray of sugar, and tumbler of water. Some, on their marble circles, were excavating the strawberry ice's melting rose; some discoursed with frivolous enthusiasm about the last song or the opera; others, with bows of greeting or departing, courteously meant for the entire company, worked in and out the swinging door. Amongst them, however, I saw a few of our own brave English, honest red-and-whites, contrasting with the pale olive of the Milanese. Then there was a Dutchman, in white hat, and with vacant, light blue eyes; there were some couriers, with side letter-pouches; some spies and bearded Americans; some Prussians, bearded and all a-stare.

But, in all the Milanese I saw one predominant, irrestrainable feeling of alarm, distrust, and concealed hatred for their conquerors. They sat away from the officers; who eyed them with contemptuous defiance, which, though only conveyed by the eyes, was as insolent as if a sword-hilt had been touched or a pistol cocked. Yes, here I was seeing the old story—the old quarrel from the old cause—the injured hating because they were injured, the injurer hating because he knew that he was hated. Here were the Saxon and Norman, the Russian and Circassian, the Tartar and the Chinaman, ever again. Let a drunken man shout out a word, and death in a moment would be in our midst. There was not a gesture or motion of either the black-coated Milanese or the white-clad Austrians but was significant of hatred. If the glass door opened and an itinerant blind guitar-player came in, led by a ragged boy, and groped about each of the tables for alms—for "qualche-cosa," for "the little money," for "the very small money, for the love of Heaven"—the surly Austrians would go on in their knots of guard-room talk and pay no heed to the old man's misery, unless some young curled darling of the Vienna drawing-rooms might pull down his great trailing flaxen moustaches and throw a

curse—a "Potztausend" or "Henker"—at the old grey head: or a fat general, padded and stiff with pride and insolence, twist round his ponderous steel sword, so that it flapped against the beggar and warned him off; and as sure as this happened, when the old man, completing his itinerary, reached the Milanese tables, he would be received with words of kindness and sympathy, and trays of change would be poured into his hat with a kindly "God be with you!" If an Italian accidentally knocked a sugar-tray off his table, or clashed a spoon unseemingly loud, or kept a paper too long, there were instantly a dozen fierce Austrian eyes turned devotioningly upon him: not for long, for that would have implied interest, but with a hasty, insolent, martinet scornfulness that seemed to augur danger to the citizen whom insult or threat could goad into a duel or into some overt act of rebellion.

Nor were the Italians one whit behind in demonstrating their scorn and hatred for the Tedeschi—the Goths. If a white-coat entered with a more than usual swagger, or with any tendency to vinous gaiety, there was no defying laugh, or hiss, or circulating joke. Still the Italian heads would certainly bend closer together, and when the heads separated, there was a very malign and vexatious smile on the features of them all. If an Austrian dropped his hat, or swept off a glass with his heavy white gloves, out came the stinging smile again. On neither side was there an absence of restraint, though the Austrians bore the surveillance defiantly, the Italians apprehensively. The landlord inclined to neither party; but, perhaps, on the whole, he was a little too obsequious to that truculent, heavy-jawed Austrian general, alone at the table to the left, balancing his spoon on the edge of his thick white coffee-cup; from which a soft fragrant steam rose like the smoke from a gun around his close iron-grey hair, and lined and stubborn brow.

All these signs of the antipathy of races I took in very slowly, refreshing myself at times with the kindly scraps of Italian greetings that kept flowing round and round me. I liked to hear the "Buona notte," the "Grazia" of the waiters, and the solemn "Addio." I had got tired of the fops, the fools, and slaves, who keep Italy enslaved, prating away of the Scala news, and of how many hearts Piccolomini had won or lost since yesterday; and I was glad to see some sheer human nature, though it might be an unpleasant aspect of it.

My eyes had nearly worked through every covert in the room, when I heard a stern cough—a severe, martinet's cough—drowning for a moment the waiters' high-pitched, mechanical, abbreviated cries to the idealised bar of "Una tazz', col lat!" "Caffè nero, Numero Tre!" "Una tazz'!"—I found it proceeded from a cruel-looking, hard-featured Austrian general sitting by himself as "Numero Due," in a quiet corner lying at my back. It required no great discernment to see he was an officer in high command, for there was a buzz among the subalterns as he entered; and now, as I turned

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again to look at him, I saw a private soldier go up to him and deliver him an official-looking sealed packet.

"Some Italian fellow's death-warrant," said a young officer near me, who, chalking the end of a cue, had just come in from the adjacent billiard-room to exchange a joke and chat with a friend of another regiment who was laughing, with two or three more flaxen-haired Austrians, over the Scala play-bill.

"Look how he signs the beast's dismissal to heaven," said the theatre-goer, turning round towards the general.

The general, who had called for pen and ink, was signing his name slowly a letter at a time, with sips of his coffee and a petit doigt of cognac between each stroke. The fact was, this thick-headed tyrant of the mess-room, who was now with such nonchalance signing the death-warrant of a poor Italian, had been promoted from the ranks for his severities in Hungary, and could not write with any very great facility. The Italians scowled when they saw him write, for the rumour had gone round the caffè that poor Luigi was to be shot to-morrow at ten o'clock in the Piazza della Fontana. The general, who did not do things without a reason, had probably some motive, known only to his own dark stern mind, in thus insultingly and openly signing this death-warrant of a brave man. The neatly-dressed citizens in black, with their varnished boots, spotless gloves, twirling canes, and paper flags, grew more silent than ever, and talked in even a lower whisper.

Yet, now and then, a tongue more daring than the rest would shoot out as if merely at some waiter's carelessness; or one, biting his red lip white, would call angrily to the waiter for some chocolate, with a voice that seemed to want the accompaniment of a blow to give it full effect. I knew well all these symptoms of suppressed rage; being of a smouldering nature myself.

Besides, did I not know that in this very city, not more than a year or two before, the streets, the wide squares—such free breathing places for bloody whirlwinds of grape-shot—the shady, narrow defiles of streets—such snug passes for barricades of riflemen—had been swilled with Austrian and Italian blood, meeting and uniting after death? Had I not been shown the quiet little street with the grated windows, looking so peaceful and calm in half sunshine, half shadow, where, but a few short months before, there had been a belching volcano of fire, the delicate, tender women throwing their children out of their arms to drag out their very pianos and harps on the heads of the cruel Austrian soldiers? Had not these white coats fired at the crowds in churches, chopped down inoffensive children, bayoneted old men, murdered women with lacerating whips: in a word, committed all the cruelties of the old Croat and the modern Cossack? Had not the very streets outside echoed with their bullying cannon, and the insolent trample of the horses of their hussars? Had not these quiet, subtly feeling Italians—so passionate in love and

hate, so retentive of kindness, of injury, with such a great past behind them to rouse their rage, and such a great possible future before them to excite their hope—had they not had fathers shot, and mothers cleft down, and children piked, and brothers trodden to bloody mud, by the very men in white who sat yonder with all the defying pride of conquerors, sipping their coffee and burning away their reed cigars with all the idle luxury of soldiers resting from their toil of blood? Why, I could see now in every face a smile of pleasure at the vexation the coming fate of the Milan patriot Luigi seemed to give the loungers in the caffè of the Cathedral square. Every now and then the constraint of silence, so deep that you might almost hear the grey ash of the cigar fall, and that the spirt of a match sounded in it like the click of a rifle, was broken by some handsome young Austrian hussar sweeping his fingers through the great curving flaxen moustache, which, soft and golden, swept up nearly to his cheek-bone, and hoarsely whispering, with a husky laugh, something about the "verdammt spitzbube," by which I knew he meant Luigi, even if he had not, as he spoke, given a sneering and sweeping look down the opposite row of sullen Italian faces, across whose brows you could see the glance passing, as if it was a sabre slash and had left a wound.

I was thinking of leaving Milan, being off to Verona on the morrow to meet the celebrated Two Gentlemen; I was, on my way, to call upon Shylock in Venice, and Petrucchio in learned Padua, hoping to get round by Milton's Vallombrosa, and not to leave Italy without seeing poor Keates's grave, out by the walls near the old Appian Way at Rome. I had stared till my eyes were tired, the caffè was getting blue and vapoury with smoke, and I felt so anti-Austrian that I longed to get to my quiet hotel bedroom, and there spout Smollett's fine Ode to Liberty, and rail at the Austrians at my ease, when, glancing into an angle of the room to the left of the general, in the nook formed by the entrance to the billiard-room, perhaps the quietest and least obtrusive spot in the whole caffè,

I saw a face—

Such a face! Good God! what a living open-air Hell Earth must be to some men!—to men who walk with graves gaping round them, to whom every wall is a mosaic of tombstones, to whom the sun seems black, and flowers and blue sky are hateful, and loving women and tender angel children are things to shake the fist at, in the hopelessness and bitterness of unchanging misery and despair! This was the face of such a purgatorial man—a living heart dumb: his eyes were rayless; his pale, bloodless lips were clenched together immovably, like those of a strong, stoical man under the surgeon's knife; no part of his waxen face moved but his eyes—his eyes! shall I ever forget them? His restless, bloodshot eyes, that swept over the room and prowled about suspiciously round every head: angrily on this one, indifferently on the other: but at last ever coming and focussing down with

basilisk, burning-glass power, on the same spot, the spot where the Austrian general sat writing, by the second lamp to the left, where a waiter, new to the place, with frightened hurry, was watching, as he pretended to hover round the next unoccupied table, wiping away a recent coffee-stain and some grey cigar-ash, and bowing to the ground as he chanced to tread on the general's sweeping white cloak lined with red—a condescension for which the satrap repaid him with a stabbing look, which contained the venom and cruelty of ten courts-martial.

The general had finished his despatch to Vienna, probably describing with cold official exultation the successful arrest of the ringleaders of the thirty-fourth conspiracy in Milan that year; he had with a flare and melting blot duly sealed the imposing document with a heavy black sepulchral seal, when an officer, stepping with a bow from the next table, advanced and took the despatch, and, as he took it, turned to the corner where the mysterious man I have mentioned sat, and pointed him out with his white glove to his commanding officer. I was so near that I could hear what he said:

"General Hassenpflug, that miserable dog you see there in the corner is the brother of the rogue we shoot to-morrow."

"Indeed," said the general, smiling condescendingly, and twirling the glove he had not yet put on by one finger. He then tapped his shelving grey brow, bit his glove, and whispered to the orderly, who, taking off his shako, passed round the tables, and, with a whisper, handed it, as if for some charitable collection, to the various groups of officers. Some laughed, and threw in a cigar or a libretto book; others tossed in half a dozen lire; one gave two gold pieces; others three or four silver crowns. The orderly bowed as each put in his contribution, and brought the jingling hateful, back to the general, who, humming "*Buona Sera*," the good night song from the Barber of Seville, waited, beating time with his foot, impatiently. I could see that he detected the character of every contributor by the alms, and by the manner in which it was given; I could see the sneer and smile alternating light and shadow in his face. He did not change a muscle as the orderly brought him the hat, but he quietly lighted a cigar with a match that shed an orange glow on his fingers, and then, turning to the orderly, ran his hand through the money contemptuously, dropping the handful he raised back into the hat. His face seemed to say, "This is, perhaps, a foolish bit of charity of mine, and is rather hard on the young subs, who have given a quarter's pay to win my good-will; but perhaps it is well saved from billiards, vingt-et-un, taverns, and lorettes." He beckoned the orderly with his finger.

The orderly came, he whispered in his ear. The orderly instantly stepped forward in a dignified way, to show that he was not accustomed to run errands, and asking the waiter for a handkerchief, poured the coins into it, then, without knotting the ends, simply gripped them

together; and now with every eye in the room, including the imperturbable general's, on him, he advanced to the poor Italian in the corner, who lay heedless of everything, with his head on the table hid in his cloaked hands, and with a few curt military words that did not reach my ear, flung down the money before him on the table. He could not have said with clearer contempt, "This is an alms," if he had struck the man as he gave it.

In the hush that followed this unusual act of generosity in the general (the general, by-the-by, gave nothing), I could hear the landlord say to his head-waiter:

"Poor Giacomo, this Austrian money will be useful to him; for all the family farm was confiscated when Luigi was found guilty."

The man did not lift up his head. He must be asleep.

"Wake him!" said the general, gruffly, as if he was giving orders to fire a battery.

The orderly shook him. That moment, sudden as a fire, the man leaped up, and, with demoniac rage, flung the money on the floor. How he stamped on it, spitting as he stamped! Then kicking, so that the money flew in a running and rolling mass about the room, clicking against sword-sheaths, or jarring against iron-legged tables, he sat down as before, gazing vacantly at the opposite wall. There was a buzz of angry voices, and one or two swords were half drawn; but the colonel, waving them back, advanced alone towards him. There was a dangerous revulsion from vacancy to a deadly serpentine intelligence in the eyes of the Italian as he advanced. It seemed to me that he could with difficulty restrain himself from rushing forward and stabbing the Austrian; but he only bit his lip harder than ever and waited for his arrival, rolling himself up in his cloak.

"Gentlemen, silence," cried the colonel; "this is a case for the hospital, not for the guard-room." Then (advancing and laying his glove on the shoulder of Luigi's brother) he added, in a rough whisper, that passed through the whole room, "We have our eyes upon you. Take care!"

The man spurned his shoulder from him. The colonel merely smiled cruelly, paid his reckoning, and strode to the door. "These," thought I, "are the fruits of oppression. These are the crimson blossoms of one bad man's ambition." At that moment, as the colonel's thick-gloved hand touched the brass knob of the door, a distant but swift growing crescendo of military music made us all forget the sullen Italian, and drew our attention to the Cathedral-square.

Every night those hated white coats defiled through the conquered city of the Viscontis and of Leonardo da Vinci, with drums and music, and great gilded lanterns borne on poles, and half a mile of glittering, slanting bayonets—half a mile of bronzed, defying faces, knowing they were scowled at and hated—half a mile of drilled Austrians, with flaxen moustaches and white coats. First down the side street by the cathedral a spot

of white and yellow—then, dashes of red feathers or flowing flags lighted by swinging lights—then a racing mob, widening, widening to broad lines of stern white men, with a bristling roof of bayonets, marching defiantly, with that peculiar rigidity and stern forward look that is so insulting and so self-conscious—nearer, through clouds of dust, nearer, with tramp even and measured, as of one vast many-footed machine, tramp, tramp, the one end of the half-mile, with feet rising as the feet of the other half come to the ground, the half-mile of white men moving on with a strong vermicular motion, like that of some white poisonous caterpillar escaped from a fat flour-bin, and passing on to some more dangerous form of existence—what a contrast to those gay opera tunes and opera marches, the stern faces under the bayonets lighted by fitful gleams of lantern light; the scowling faces of the crushed-up citizens who cower, driven up in doorways, to look!

I went home as the colonel took horse at the door for his suburban barracks, and, just as the procession faded away down a side street, playing a beautiful fairy waltz by Strauss, I got my key from the porter, undressed quickly, said a short prayer for England, and threw myself under my gauzy counterpane. I fell down into a dream as into a well. I fancied myself in a cathedral, strewn with kneeling Italians, bowed before the cross under the coloured shade of those giant windows of the Duomo. Suddenly the priests threw off their cloth-of-gold robes and appeared as Austrian generals, the chorister boys with the censers were as quickly transformed to drummers, muskets were handed over from behind the great silver cross and jewelled altar, and the slaughter began. The people rushed to the doors; the bullets ploughed through them; then a darkness rose, and a chilling, stifling dread mingled with my dreams—a sense of rage, and yet more of fear, of struggle, of dread and apprehension. My heart beats so loud I can hear nothing else—beat—beat—it pulses like a parchment drum. It comes upon me—there are drums somewhere below. The windows are open—it is an early review. I look at my watch on the table—just six. I rise—drums nearer. I throw back the green Venetian blinds—the sun pours in as I look out over the balcony. Austrian drums!—here they come! A great shining slant of glistening bayonets and white coats defile past. Drums, drums, drums! vibrant and threatening—fainter—fainter—out of sight—fainter.

I ring the bell; I hear my boots clumped down outside, and call the waiter.

"What are these drums?"

"Austrian demonstration," he says, "signor mio. Terrible news. General Hassenpflug was found last night, at about eleven and a half, just outside the Porta Vercellina, on the road to his Vercelli villa, stark dead, shot through the heart, and on the white vineyard wall, over his battered head, was written by a bloody finger, 'VIVA L'ITALIA!'"—Immediately I thought of those watchful eyes. I dressed, and thought.

When I came down stairs into the coffee-room, I asked the waiter, who was tripping about adjusting the breakfast-tables, if there were any suspicion of the murderer, and if he knew at what hour the murder was committed.

"They say, signor mio, that the murderer is the brother of Luigi who was shot this morning at six; I believe the body was found at a quarter-past eleven."

I had left the caffè at ten.

It was last December, about Christmas-time. I had plunged again into the vortex of City business, and had almost forgotten Milan. One night, when I returned to my country-house near London, a policeman came to tell me that a poor Italian musician had just been found frozen to death in one of my field sheds.

I went with the policeman till we reached the shed. He led me in, and, holding his bull's-eye to the head of the dead man, showed me a shrunk, worn face, that I recognised as Giacomo's—the face I never could forget.

"And the curious thing which is, sir," said the policeman, lighting me out again to the back of the shed, "that we found him, as if asleep, outside in the snow, just where I stand. He had written some foreign words on the snow, that you still may be able to read, if you know foreign languages, for I took care not to draw the corpse over them. Here, where my light is, sir."

I looked down and read—

"VIVA L'ITALIA!"

It was of course a mere coincidence the poor man coming to my field to die, but still it was strange—coincidences are strange. *Viva l'Italia!* Poor fellow!

A NEW SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY.

IN FIVE PARTS. PART THE LAST.

CHAPTER THE FOURTEENTH.

"Who's that says he doesn't believe in pre-sentiments?" said a dark, bony man, who was sitting in a corner where I had hitherto not observed him.

A young man seated opposite me answered modestly that numberless instances in which he had himself experienced forebodings which had proved utterly groundless, had led him to be less apprehensive when full of anticipation of coming evil, than when an unusual gaiety was upon him, as he had oftener noted this latter sensation to be the forerunner of evil than the former.

I dare say there are few persons who read these pages who do not know what it is to be involved in a conversation which bores them to an excess, while some one is talking within ear-shot upon some subject of extreme interest, which it would be very pleasant to listen to. Those who have passed through such an experience will be ready to corroborate my statement that the effect of listening and answering while you are trying to catch what is going on elsewhere, is a great and unpleasant one.

It was in this position that I now found myself. The little man with the Morning Post

was troubling me with his small chatterings, while the bony man, who was a believer, I found, in presentiments, was narrating something in defence of his belief which I wanted very much to hear. As far as I can remember, the effect of what these two personages—the little Snob and the Presentimentalist—were saying was something to this purpose—a desperate jumble, as the reader will see:

SNOB.—I can't say I know him personally, but he's one of those people whom one has met, you know, in society. He married a niece of that man—

PRESENTIMENTALIST.—It occurred in my own experience while travelling in the East, and—

SNOB.—The family have large estates in Somersetshire; and, indeed, my brother, whose property extends some miles in the same direction, and who is intimate with all the county families—

MYSELF.—Yes, so it must—

PRESENTIMENTALIST.—I had had a bad time of it with the Arabs that day, who, as usual, wanted to rob me—

SNOB.—So when these people came down to settle there, the question became important whether or not they would be received into society—

MYSELF.—(Silent.)

PRESENTIMENTALIST.—Till at last I was obliged, very reluctantly, to pull out my six-barrelled revolver, and pointing it at the man who appeared to be the ringleader, I informed him, in my best Arabic, that there were, besides the barrel he saw, five others ready—

SNOB (who must have been going on all this time).—So much so, indeed, that very few of the county families had called upon the new comers at all. Of course, it placed my brother in a very unpleasant position, and—

PRESENTIMENTALIST.—Luckily enough—for more reasons than the great one that bloodshed was avoided—luckily enough the threat was quite sufficient, and I was able to get away—

SNOB.—It became a question of great importance what course my brother should adopt, whether, in short, he should call upon them or not. Now, what should you have done under the circumstances?

MYSELF (dreamily to Snob).—I should have let fly the revolver amongst them.

SNOB (touchily).—I am afraid, sir, I have not been fortunate enough to secure your attention.

MYSELF.—I beg your pardon—I meant to say that you did quite right. I agree with your view perfectly—yes—oh, decidedly.

It wouldn't do. Snob was offended. He entrenched himself behind the Morning Post, and I was left in peace to listen to the Presentimentalist, who had seduced me into a breach of manners of which I was heartily ashamed. The believer in presentiments had, by this time, got into the thick of his story, and it was curious to observe my neighbour with the Morning Post trying not to listen to it. His eye wandered

perpetually from the sheet before him, and at last he was obliged to give it up, and give his whole attention, as the rest of us did, to what was going on.

Having lost the good opinion of this little gentleman, do not let me lose the Presentimentalist's story as well. Where has he got to now?

"I got over my difficulty with the Arabs," said the believer in presentiments, "returned to my temporary abode at Jerusalem, and went into the little garden at the back of the house to fire off the revolver, as I have an excessive dislike of keeping fire-arms by me loaded. It was well I had not been driven in my affray with the Arabs to the necessity of using my revolver as well as showing it, for I found, on pulling the trigger, that it was a fixture, and that, owing to some derangement in the lock, I could not stir it with all my force. As I never went out without being armed, it became necessary to have the pistol looked to at once. So I went to a friend of mine, a resident at Jerusalem—an Englishman and a surgeon—to ask him if he could tell me of any mechanic in the place who was likely to understand the piece of machinery which required repair. There was only one man, he said, who could be trusted in such a case. He was a German locksmith, who had been living a year or two at Jerusalem, and who was the most intelligent workman in the town. He could do what I wanted if it could be done at all, and my friend the surgeon would go with me to his house at once. It was a dark and miserable place, this locksmith's shop, dirty and inconvenient for the purpose to which it had been applied. It was surrounded by the implements of its owner's trade, an unpleasant one enough in a climate where the necessity of using a fire is so distressing a thing as it is in the East. But the locksmith! Who could observe anything else in the place when that man was there to fix the attention, to attract the eyes which shuddered while they looked? If ever I saw a man with a great sorrow, a heavy anxiety, a deadly expectancy, gnawing at his heart, he was before me when I first caught sight of that German locksmith. He was a tall and powerfully built man, but attenuated to a shadow. His hollow eyes, sunk deep in his head, were full of an indescribable horror. His hair was long and grey, but his beard was black as jet.

"But what a doomed look—what a fatal aspect!

"And yet, to a physiognomist, the mark that had been set upon this man's brow had not been left there by a deed of crime. It was the ghost of some sight of horror that haunted his past—it was the apprehension of some impending misery that hung over his future. Briefly explaining to him what was wanted, I left the revolver in his hands, cautioning him that it was loaded in every chamber. The locksmith shuddered as he took the weapon from my hands.

"What, in Heaven's name, is the matter with that man?" were my first words as I left

the shop with my friend the surgeon; 'there is some sad history attached to that man's life, I know.'

"There is," said the surgeon, "and it so happens that the circumstances connected with it are, perhaps, better known to myself than to any other person you could apply to."

"The story," said the believer in presentiments, looking round at the company assembled at the English tavern, "is a short one, and if you feel interested in hearing it, I will narrate it, partly as the surgeon told it to me, and partly (for at last I had some share in it) as the facts came under my own observation."

We expressed our anxiety to hear more, and the believer in presentiments went on as follows:

"About four years ago a party of travellers arrived at a certain convent in Jerusalem, at which you can be put up for the night and entertained very much, as European travellers who are crossing the Alps are received at the Great St. Bernard. Amongst the party who had newly arrived was one who—as had been the case with myself—had got the lock of his pistol so deranged that it was impossible to stir it, and as he, like myself, and most other Eastern travellers, very much disliked the idea of proceeding on his journey unarmed, he was anxious to have the defect in his weapon attended to at once. It was easier to feel this want than to get it supplied, there being no one at that time in Jerusalem who would be at all likely to understand the pistol in question, which was a revolver, and furnished with all the latest improvements. At length, however, after much consideration and casting about as to what was to be done, one of the lay brothers of the convent suggested a way out of the difficulty which seemed promising enough. There were, he said, a couple of German travellers sleeping that night in the convent who were locksmiths by trade, and he had little doubt that one of them would be able to do what was necessary to the pistol, if anybody could. The weapon was handed over to the lay brother, who at once took it to the room which the two Germans occupied, and, explaining to them what was amiss, asked if they would undertake to set it right. The traveller, he added, would pay them liberally for their trouble."

"The two Germans were sitting at supper when the lay brother came in with the pistol in his hand. The elder of them, whose name was Max, getting up from table, took the weapon from the monk, and carried it to the window (as the light was fading), that he might examine it more completely. His friend remained at table sitting with his back towards Max, finishing his supper in a philosophical manner enough. The German who was examining the pistol had not been so occupied for a couple of minutes, when it went off with a loud noise. At that moment, the poor fellow who was sitting eating his supper at the table fell forward without uttering a sound. The charge had entered his back."

"He fell upon his face on the ground, and

when my friend, who told me the story—and who as surgeon to the embassy was sent for at once—when he arrived, it seemed to him at first as if two men had been killed instead of one, for both the Germans were stretched upon the floor, and he who was to be the survivor, holding the other locked in his arms, wore upon his ghastly countenance the deadlier look of the two. It was quite a difficult thing to separate them. The wounded man had got the other's hand in his, as if by that to reassure him, and to show him that he loved him all the same."

"The surgeon caused the wounded man—it was but too evident that he had not long to live—to be removed to the infirmary and laid upon a bed to die. It was a bed that stood beneath a window, and across which, when the sun was setting, the shadow of a cypress fell. A very brief examination showed that any attempt to relieve the dying man would be useless, and they could only stanch the blood that flowed from his wound and watch him with that breathless eagerness—there is none like it—with which men watch their brother, when each short breath, drawn less and less often, seems as though it were the last. As for the other German, he was sunk in a heap upon the ground beside the bed in speechless stupefaction. One of his hands was on the couch, and the expiring effort of the dying man was to take this passive hand in his. Those who were around him seeing then a change upon his face, leant hastily over him, for they heard him whisper faintly."

"'Poor Max,' he said—'poor Max.' The last act of the man who died was to pity the man who lived."

"And well he might."

"For some time it was very uncertain whether the man who had thus slain his best and dearest friend would not speedily follow him into another world—so fearfully was he affected. For a still longer period it was doubtful in the last degree whether he would retain his reason. And, indeed, at the time when the story was told me he could hardly be said to be altogether of sound mind. At that very time the man was haunted by a fixed presentiment that he should die one day as his friend had died. No reasoning with him had the least effect, the presentiment had taken a hold upon his mind which nothing could shake. Those who wished him well—and there were many—had often tried to lead him to a happier frame of mind, and to make him take an interest in his own future. They had urged him, since he had taken up his abode in Jerusalem, to settle there more comfortably, to get into a better and more convenient workshop, and, since his skill as a workman always ensured him the means of living, to marry. For they knew that the fresh interests of a domestic nature which would follow would be of the greatest possible service to him."

"The day will come," was his invariable answer to all such advice—"the day will come when some one will shoot me with a pistol through the back, just as I shot my friend. That day will surely come; what have I to do, then, with a

wife, or children—with a wife whom I should leave a widow—with children whom I should leave fatherless? What have I to do with settling—with comfort, or a home?

"I shall have a home when the pistol-bullet sends me to my grave beside my friend.

"I shall go home then," said the German locksmith."

CHAPTER THE FIFTEENTH

"So much," continued the narrator of this sad story, "for what I learnt from my friend the surgeon concerning the past life of the singular man by whose appearance I had been so powerfully struck. Of the remaining portion of his history the particulars came under my own knowledge, and with the circumstances of its termination I myself was to a certain extent mixed up.

"My revolver was sent back to me repaired, and as I was just about to start away on a short journey into the environs, and was in some haste, I set off without trying it.

"In the course of the day, however, partly wishing to ascertain how far my pistol was restored to a condition of usefulness, partly from a desire to bring down a bird which I saw on the wing, apparently within pistol-shot, I lifted my revolver to let fly at him.

"The weapon missed fire.

"On examination, I found that the defect this time was precisely the reverse of what it had been before. The lock went so loosely now, and had so little spring in it, that the hammer did not fall upon the cap with sufficient force to explode it. I tried the pistol several times, and finding it useless, sent it again, on my return to Jerusalem, to the German locksmith, charging my servant to explain to him its new defect, and above all things to caution him as to its being loaded, as I had done myself on the former occasion.

"Mark how that pistol played with the man's life! Mark how it returns to him again and again! Why not have done its work at once?

"The revolver was brought back to me the next day in a state, as I was told, of perfect repair.

"This time I took it into the garden to try it. The first time it went off well enough, but at the next time—for I was determined to prove it thoroughly—I found that its original defect had returned, and the lock would not stir, pull at the trigger as I might.

"There is something radically wrong here," I said. 'I will go myself and see the German locksmith about it, without delay.'

"That pistol again," said the locksmith, looking up, as I entered his miserable abode.

"What would I not have given to have been able to say anything that would have altered the expression of that haggard countenance. But it was impossible. I made some attempts to draw the poor fellow into conversation, though I felt that even if these had not proved (as they did) wholly useless, my comparative ignorance of his language would have stood in the way of my saying anything that could have been of any

service. Our conversation, then, limited itself to the matter in hand, and we agreed that the only thing to be done with the pistol now was to take its lock off, and make a perfectly new one in imitation of it. This, however, would take some time, and it would be necessary that the locksmith should keep the weapon by him for three or four days at least. He took it from my hands as he told me so, and placed it carefully on a shelf at the back of his shop.

"Above all things," I said, as I left the house—"above all things, remember that the revolver is loaded."

"I shall not forget it," he said, turning round to me with a ghastly smile.

"This, then, was the third time that that pistol was taken back to the German locksmith for repair.

"It was the last.

"I can see," continued the narrator of this strange story, looking round on us, after a pause—"I can see that you all know what happened, and that I have only to tell you *how* the fatal termination of my story was brought about.

"The German locksmith, being very much occupied, owing to the reputation he had obtained as a clever workman, had taken into his employment a sort of apprentice or assistant, to help him in the simple and more mechanical parts of his trade. He was not much use. A stupid, idle, trifling fellow at best. One day, soon after I had left my revolver for the last time to be mended, this lad came in from executing some errand, and, standing idly about the place, took down my pistol from the shelf on which it lay, and began to look at it with some curiosity, not being accustomed to the sight of a revolver.

"The locksmith, turning round from his work, saw the lad thus occupied, and hastily told him to put the pistol back in the place he had taken it from. He had not had time, he said, to attend to it yet. It was loaded, and it was dangerous to pull it about in that manner. Having said this, the German locksmith turned round, and went on with what he was about, *with his back towards the lad* whom he had just cautioned, and who, he naturally supposed, had restored the pistol at once to its shelf.

"The boy's curiosity, however, was excited by the revolver, and, instead of doing as he was bid, he retained it in his hand, and went on prying into it, examining how the lock acted, and what were its defects.

"The poor German was going on with his work, muttering to himself, 'Strange, how that pistol returns to me, again and again.'

"The words were not out of his lips when the fatal moment, so long expected, arrived, and the charge from my revolver entered his back. He fell forward in a moment, saying as he fell, 'At last.'

"The foolish boy rushed out of the shop with the pistol in his hand, screaming for assistance so loudly that the neighbours were soon alarmed, and hastened in a crowd to the house of the poor locksmith.

"My friend the surgeon was instantly sent for, and from him I gained the particulars which follow:

"Turning the poor fellow over on his face, and cutting open his garments to examine the wound, the surgeon said to those who were standing around: 'The ball has entered his back; if by chance it should have glanced off and passed round by the ribs, as will sometimes happen, this wound would not be fatal.'

"It is fatal," said the wounded man, with a sudden effort. 'Have I been waiting for this stroke so long, and shall it fail to do its work when it comes? It is fatal,' he gasped again, 'and I shall die—but not here.'

"I have to relate a horrible and incredible thing, which, impossible as it seems, is yet true.

"The German locksmith started up from where he lay, pushing aside all those who stood around him with an unnatural and inconceivable strength. His body swayed for an instant from side to side, and then he darted forwards. The crowd gave way before him, and he rushed from the house. He tore along the streets—the few people whom he met giving way before him, and looking after him in horror as he flew along—his clothes cut open at the back, blood-stained and dripping, and with death in his regard. Not one pause, not an abatement in his speed till he reached the infirmary, passed the man who kept the door, and up the stairs he flew, nor stopped till he came to a bed which stands beneath the window, and across which the shadow of a cypress falls when the sun begins to sink.

"It was the bed on which his friend had breathed his last.

"'I must die here,' said the German locksmith, as he fell upon it. 'It is here that I must die.'

"And there he died. The haunting thought which had made his existence a living death was justified. The presentiment had come true at last; and when the thunder-cloud, which had hung so long over this man's life, had discharged its bolt upon his head, it seemed to us as if the earth were then lighter, for the shade had passed away.

"Is death the name for a release like this? Who could look upon his happy face, as he lay upon that bed, and say so?

"It was not the end of a life—but the beginning."

CHAPTER THE LAST.

THE discovery of my friends Clipper and Mathews, which would have made my stay in Paris all the pleasanter, was made, as is often the case, just too late. It was time for me to be off. I was getting weary of my holiday, and, having spent my money, was anxious to get back and make some more. Two days after hearing the story of the German locksmith, I got up one morning at half-past six, and taking a hasty breakfast at Paris, was in London and at home in time for supper.

And now—back among the mean and ugly streets, the dull monotonous miles of shabby brick and mortar, of our huge and melancholy

capital—what are my sensations? what do I find now? This: that the friendly faces which those screens of brick and mortar hide, the doors so gladly opened to admit me, the hands stretched out to bid me welcome, the daily interchange of thought and observation, the social meal, the fireside group, the thought that there are among those who greet me daily some who, in the midst of those cares of their own, which naturally must have such a hold on every human soul, have yet a corner in their hearts where an interest in what affects me finds a place—these things, do they not compensate for all the gaiety and charm of the beautiful and brilliant town in which I have lived a month alone?

Indeed they do. It was a selfish thought that wish to be alone, lest the plans of a companion should clash with mine, and I should fail to have my way in everything. Besides, did I get my way after all? Not always. Nor was it always a pleasant one when I did.

Who is free? Who is independent? Who does as he likes? If friends and associates do not interfere to change our plans, are there not fifty other ways besides in which they may be overthrown and dashed aside? Better a thousand times to be bored by others than to bore oneself. Better anything than for man to be alone.

APPALLING DISCLOSURE FOR THE LORD CHAMBERLAIN.

ENGLAND has the happiness of knowing that the new Ministry has been set in working order at last. If the representation of almost all the contradictory forms of political opinion, and the official union of statesmen who have been hitherto remarkable for their capacity of disagreeing with one another, be the secret for forming a permanent Government, the new administration may look forward to a long life, and the free and independent electors may shut up the vote-markets all over the country for some time to come. To the Ministry, generally, a patriotic private individual has nothing particular to say. They have their lessons to practise in fitting themselves for their new places. The Premier has to learn the necessity of treating the House of Commons (as purporting to represent the small nation who take the liberty of occupying Great Britain) with some little respect and civility. The Foreign Secretary has to steer the British nation carefully through the shoals, quicksands, and whirlpools of existing continental complications—no more spirited or honest man than he, could try to do it. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has to collect all his powers of persuasion, with the object of reconciling his countrymen to some few additional figures on the tax-collectors' bills. Other minor members of the Ministry, in and out of the Cabinet, have other responsibilities to confront.

The one exceptional person of quality, so far as I can see, whose official occupations are not likely to be at all affected by these stirring times, is the noble lord who presides

over the administration of our places of theatrical amusement. At a period when all his fellow-potentates of the governing classes are called on to exert themselves with special activity, it must be a humiliating reflection to the Lord Chamberlain to think that his peculiar office, in connexion with the drama, is now more than ever likely to be little better than a species of vexatious sinecure. If I have rightly interpreted his lordship's sensations—and my deep respect for his office and himself, although I have no idea who he is, assures me that I have done so—I feel great pleasure in coming forward with a proposal for specially employing this minister's dormant energies, and for presenting his office in a prominent position before the eyes of the whole country. In plain terms, I have hereby to request that the Lord Chamberlain, on the ground of common humanity, will be pleased to shut up all our theatres forthwith, and to erase the Stage henceforth and for ever from the list of English professions.

I rest this proposal solely on the ground of common humanity. I have no objection whatever, either of the fanatically sectarian or of the severely critical sort, to set up against my theatrical fellow-citizens. I oppose the continuance of their professional existence purely for their own unfortunate sakes; precisely as my philanthropic predecessors opposed the employment of climbing-boys in foul chimneys; precisely as civilised Europe still opposes the buying and selling of African negroes. The case of the climbing-boy was, that he underwent tortures; the case of the negro is, that he undergoes tortures; the case of the equally miserable and equally uncomplaining actor and actress is (as I shall presently show), that they undergo tortures.

I live in the country, in a position of happy retirement. Everything that happens inside our snug little town, interests me deeply. Nothing that happens outside of it, is of the slightest importance to me. If there had been a theatre in our snug little town, I should have been long since familiarly acquainted with the British Stage. As there is no theatre in our snug little town, I know nothing whatever about the British Stage. Until yesterday I never gave the subject a thought, because it was not a subject connected with our town. Actors and actresses will please not be offended at this; we treat all other eminent people and national subjects, when they are unfortunate enough to be out of our town, with precisely similar neglect. Popular characters in London would find themselves total strangers among us. We never know anything about a new book, a new picture, or a new play, until it has obtruded itself by main force on our attention; even then, I would not give much for its chance of absorbing us, for five minutes together, if our two rival doctors happened to have a new quarrel at the time; or if our High Church clergyman omitted bowing to our dissenting solicitor when they passed each other in the street; or if the town-council met on that day with only the average

amount of wrangling in the course of their parliamentary debates. It is hardly in the power of words to do justice to our immense capacity for ignoring everything that does not happen to be locally connected with us, in our snug little town.

Well, as I have said: until yesterday I never gave the British Stage and the unfortunate persons who practise on it so much as a thought. On that memorable day, however, a certain small pamphlet, descriptive of the training that actors and actresses must go through to practise their profession, fell into my hands by pure accident. I took it up with perfect indifference; but the moment I opened it, the moment my eyes fell upon one of the pages, I felt my flesh creep. By the time I had read the thing through, I was cold all over—my hands were elevated in sorrow and amazement—generous tears of sympathy and indignation started to my eyes—stern resolution to expose unheard-of barbarities, and to vindicate a hapless race, fired my mind. I seized pen, ink, and paper in the cause of suffering humanity—and here I am.

The pamphlet to which I refer is dated 1858, and is entitled, "The Amateur's Guide to the Stage; or, How to become a Theatrical: Pointing out the certain way to Eminence and Distinction in this lucrative, honourable, and pleasant Profession: describing the points in Love, Grief, Despair, Madness, Jealousy, Remorse, Rage, Hatred, Revenge, Tyranny, Humility, and Joy; with all the varied phases of Villany, Hypocrisy, &c. &c."

My present business is not with the moral aspect of this extremely painful subject. Let me proceed at once to the physical side of it; let me show, from the pages of the audacious publication now under notice, the precise species of suffering which is habitually and officially inflicted on patient human nature by the profession of the Stage.

At the ninth page of this pamphlet the disclosures open partially to view, in one of the sections of the subject, which is entitled, with shocking flippancy, "Making up the Face." I find it here laid down as law, that "every one on entering the theatre at night should wash his face." Thus far, there is no objection to be made. If people who have business in a theatre go to that business with dirty faces, it is of course highly desirable that they should be washed at the first opportunity. Well, the dirt having been, most properly, removed, is the face of the washed man or woman thereupon mercifully let alone? No. A powder-puff is passed over it; over that again, a mixture of carmine and Chinese vermilion, boiled in milk and then suffered to dry, is smeared with a hare's-foot. If the character to be represented is required to appear with moustache and whiskers, hair made of Crape is next glued—glued—to the cheeks and upper lip. If the personage is to be a Moor or a negro, his persecuted physiognomy is treated with still greater indignity. Lard—horrible to relate—lard, with which our nice roasted capons have made us all pleasantly familiar at the social board, is daubed over the much-enduring face which the victim has just

washed; and Spanish brown (in the case of the Moor), or burnt cork powdered (in the case of the negro), is daubed over the lard; carmine, in both instances, is daubed over the Spanish brown and burnt cork, to "throw up the impression." Let us not stop to inquire what this mysterious phrase can possibly mean, for the subject is too greasy and too painful to be dwelt on. Let us rather follow the unfortunate person whose face has been powdered, painted, and larded, to the point at which the exercise of his or her profession begins on the stage—to the point, also, from which the disclosures of bodily suffering burst on us in their full terror.

At page twelve of the pamphlet, the instructions for expressing the furious passions, enumerated on the title-page, begin. On reckoning up these passions, together with some of the milder affections of the mind which are added to them on the list, I find that they amount to forty-four in number, and that they are by no means exhausted even when they have reached that figure, on the confession of the writer himself, who declares that he has merely selected them from many others. We will, in our turn, select a few examples of what the actor or actress is expected to undergo in order to earn the means of subsistence. Persons who may not have prepared themselves for what is now to come, by reading past disclosures in connexion with slaves and climbing-boys, are strongly recommended not to proceed any farther with the perusal of this article.

Here, literally and exactly copied, are the directions for performing a passionate character on the stage:

"Rage, or Anger, expresses itself with rapidity, interruption, rant, harshness, and trepidation. The neck is stretched out, the head forward, often nodding, and shaken in a menacing manner against the object of the passion; the eyes alternately staring and rolling, the eyebrows drawn down over them, and the forehead wrinkled into clouds; the nostrils stretched wide, and every muscle strained; the breast heaving, and the breath fetched hard; the mouth open, and drawn on each side towards the ears, showing the teeth in a gnashing posture; the feet often stamping; the right arm frequently thrown out and menacing, with the clenched fist shaken, and a general and violent agitation of the whole body."

If these frightful directions have not altogether prostrated the proverbially gentle reader, two additional specimens may perhaps be endured. They relate to Grief and Despair.

"Grief, sudden and violent, expresses itself by beating the head and forehead, tearing the hair, and catching the breath, as if choking; also by screaming, weeping, stamping, lifting the eyes from time to time to heaven, and hurrying backwards and forwards."

"Despair bends the eyebrows downwards, clouds the forehead, rolls the eyes, and sometimes bites the lips and gnashes with the teeth; the heart is supposed to be too much hardened

to suffer the tears to flow, yet the eyeballs will be red and inflamed; the head is hung down upon the breast; the arms are bent at the elbows, the fist clenched hard, and the whole body strained and violently agitated."

I ask any reasonable being to reflect, first of all, on the exquisitely intricate, tender, and delicate construction of the nerves and muscles in the human face; and then to consider what must be the effect on those nerves and muscles, of the terrible epileptic contortions here insisted on, when habitually practised for hire, by men and women, night after night. Here are strainings of the neck, starings and rollings of the eyes, wrinklings of the forehead into clouds, stretchings of the nostrils, distensions of the mouth, gnashings of the teeth, beatings of the head, tearings of the hair, catchings of the breath, bitings of the lip, and inflammations of the eyeballs, all coolly enumerated as a species of physical stock-in-trade with out which the miserable stage performer cannot so much as start in business with a prospect of success. I protest my own forehead begins to wrinkle into clouds as I trace these terrifying lines; my own eyes begin to stare and roll; my own placid features feel in some slight degree the torture that is nightly self-inflicted by the devoted wretches condemned to this direful profession.

There are people in this world who will endeavour to excuse everything and to make light of everything. Such people will tell me that the heart-rending directions here quoted, only apply to the performance of Tragedy, and that when Comedy has its turn the distorted faces of the actors snatch a brief repose. I meet that assertion with a flat denial, on the authority of the pamphlet. The directions for impersonating the milder and lighter affections of the mind simply involve a new set of contortions. For instance, "Joy is expressed by clapping of hands and exulting looks; the eyes are opened wide, and on some occasions raised to heaven; the countenance is smiling, not composedly, but with features aggravated. Modesty, or Submission, levels the eyes to the breast, if not to the feet of the superior character. In Boasting, or Affected Courage, the eyes stare, the eyebrows are drawn down, the face is red and bloated, the mouth pouts out, the voice is hollow and thundering." Where is the repose, here, for the tortured theatrical face. Joy cannot smile without aggravated features. Modesty cannot express itself without levelling its eyes at other people's feet. Even Boasting—jovial, thoughtless, comically mendacious Boasting—must draw down its eyebrows, swell its face, pout its mouth, and thunder with its voice. The system I denounce is at least consistent. There are always physical convulsions of one kind or another at the bottom of it, survey it where you will.

But, why dwell on the sufferings of the actors' faces only, when their limbs and lungs are assailed as mercilessly as their features by this barbarous profession? The passion of pride, for example, when it gets on the stage, stretches the legs "to a distance from one another, and

takes large and solemn strides." Remorse "bends the knees;" Hatred "throws out the hands;" Threatening "brandishes the hands;" Acquitting (a passion I never heard of before, out of the jury-box) "waves the hands;" Fear "draws back the elbows parallel with the sides;" Hope "spreads the arms;" Denying (a passion to which we are all subject, especially when we are asked for money) "pushes your open right hand from you, and turns your face the contrary way." As for the lungs, the vocal contortions prescribed for them equal the contortions imposed on the face and limbs. The victims of the stage are expected to speak on a system of impossible modulation, comprised under the following heads: "High, loud, and quick; Low, loud, and quick; High, loud, and slow; High, soft, and slow." And when they have accomplished these preliminary vocal gymnastics, they are condemned to get on next to "Pauses of Reflection, and to Pauses of Confusion, filled up with Hesitative Pantings." I pledge my word of honour to the correctness of these phrases, as being exactly copied from the pamphlet.

On the stage. I have considered these atrocities, hitherto, purely with reference to the public life, or business existence, of the sufferers. But suppose we now follow them, men and women, into private life? Here, the prospect is hideous. When people have accustomed themselves to the practice of contortions, night after night (it may be for years together, assuming that the bodily energies of theatrical individuals are of peculiarly robust fabric), those contortions must become habitual, and must cling to them as a kind of second nature in their brief moments of retirement by their own firesides. What is the necessary consequence? This unhappy race must be unspeakably portentous and terrible to the humanity that surrounds them. Conceive the effect of stretched nostrils, distended mouths, clouded foreheads, inflamed eyeballs, and hesitative pantings, within the sacred circle of home, and before the scared tribunal of the neighbouring tradespeople! Let me take two instances only in support of the lamentable considerations here suggested. When I relieve a meritorious and miserable crossing-sweeper, my emotions of pity are simply expressed by my putting my hand in my pocket and giving the man a penny. What actor, in a similar position, could be expected to conduct himself in a similar manner? He has been learning to express the emotion of Pity on the stage; he has practised his art so often, that the actions connected with it have become a habit and a second nature to him; and, as a necessary consequence, when he relieves his necessitous fellow-citizen, his emotions of Pity (as I find from the directions in the pamphlet, under that head) mechanically lead him into looking down on the crossing-sweeper "with lifted hands,

eyebrows drawn down, mouth open, and features drawn together." His voice (when he says, Here's a penny for you) is "frequently interrupted with sighs;" and his hand (when he has presented the penny) is "employed in wiping his eyes."

Again, when my own beloved wife enters the butcher's shop, a little anxious and perplexed about what she shall order for dinner, she taps her pearly teeth with the handle of her parasol, and looks with smiling uncertainty at the rosy murderer of sheep and oxen who awaits her orders knife in hand. In a similar position, how does the actor's own beloved wife, who is on the stage, and who has performed Anxious and Perplexed characters so many hundreds of times that she has become part and parcel of those characters herself, necessarily and inevitably behave before the butcher? Guided once more by the pamphlet (see "Anxiety or Perplexity," in the list of passions), I find that the unhappy woman enters the shop with "all the parts of her body drawn together; with her arms either crossed upon her bosom, or covering her eyes, or rubbing her forehead; with her head hanging on her breast; with her eyelids close shut and pinched, and with her whole body vehemently agitated."

With this impressive picture I close the case I have undertaken to prove. More disclosures might be added, but they would only prolong to no purpose this painful and serious subject. The nervous systems of our governing classes are precious to their country; and I decline to proceed any farther, after the shocks which I must have inflicted, by this time, on the impressionable nature of the Lord Chamberlain. I have shown, on printed and published authority, what the effect of the stage profession is on the lungs, limbs, and faces, on the public and private lives, of actors and actresses; and I have surely established my claim, in the eyes of all friends of humanity, to call for the peremptory and merciful suppression of playhouses and players. The decision now rests with his lordship. I will allow him a brief interval for Pauses of Reflection and Pauses of Confusion; and I await his answer—either High, loud, and quick, or Low, loud, and quick, which he pleases—with Hesitative Pantings, on my own part.

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